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ABSTRACT

The guidebook describes a model for a community-based adult and family literacy program for immigrant and refugee communities that draws on and enhances the strengths of community members with strong educational backgrounds who can serve as community literacy teachers and leaders (interns). Mentors from adult education programs trained the interns to teach English as a Second Language and English literacy. The project, a collaborative effort of three adult education programs, a university, and a literacy organization, is described in the guidebook. An introductory section gives an overview of the project and the guidebook. In the first five chapters, the project is detailed, including context and rationale, project structure and participants, the training/mentoring component, transition from training to teaching, and project evaluation. The final chapter outlines findings, challenges, and recommendations. Lists of references and resources for training are included. Appended materials include a letter welcoming interns to the training program, samples of minutes and handouts from training workshops, and some sample evaluation tools (possible questions for student exit interviews and checklists for student assessment). (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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FROM THE COMMUNITY TO THE COMMUNITY

A Guidebook for Training Community Literacy Instructors

Final Report

Community Training for Adult and Family Literacy Project

a collaboration between
The Haitian Multi-Service Center, Dorchester, MA,
The Harborside Community Center, East Boston, MA,
The Jackson-Mann Community School, Allston, MA,
and
The Boston Adult Literacy Fund

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While this report was written primarily by Elsa Auerbach, the writing would not have been possible without the support and feedback of the project staff. The Mentors shaped the structure of the report and provided critical comments on each section as it was drafted, as did Carol Chandler of the Haitian Multi-Service Center. Joanne Arnaud, the Executive Director of the Boston Adult Literacy Fund, deserves particular gratitude, not only for her insightful and timely assistance with the writing of the report, but also for her constant good cheer, balanced outlook, and thoughtful support at every step in the implementation process. She was, in many ways, the midwife of this project, providing key support from its inception until its completion.

Introduction: What is this Guidebook?

The need for adult literacy and ESL services within immigrant and refugee communities cannot be disputed. The National Adult Literacy Survey dramatically underscores the extent of this need with its finding that 25 percent of those performing in the lowest proficiency level were immigrants. At adult education centers across the U.S., these statistics translate into long waiting lists, large classes, inadequate resources, and pressure to move students quickly through programs. More and more of the students coming to the centers for beginning ESL classes have had little chance to go to school in their own countries and are unable to read and write in their first languages. Teachers who are unfamiliar with the languages and cultures of these students often feel overwhelmed and underprepared. Clearly, the question facing policy makers, administrators, and teachers is not whether there is a need for adult ESL/literacy services, but how this need can best be met.

At the same time, however, resources within the communities of the learners often go unrecognized. Refugee and immigrant communities are rich with people who have strong educational backgrounds in their own languages and a desire to contribute to their communities. Because they have shared the experiences of coming to a new country, they are intimately familiar with the needs and concerns of literacy students, as well as with issues of cultural and linguistic transition. Yet they are often unable to make use of their strengths because of limitations in their English ability or lack of formal credentials; even as their English improves, it is difficult for them to find meaningful work or to access higher education. Thus, it is not uncommon for highly skilled, community-minded immigrants and refugees to find themselves working on assembly line or cleaning offices.

This Guidebook describes a model for drawing on and enhancing the strengths of this latter group of immigrants and refugees in order to address the needs of those with minimal prior education, ESL or literacy. It is a model based on the principle of *'from the community - to the community'* in which community needs are addressed by community resources. The Guidebook documents a collaboration between three adult education programs which worked initially with the University of Massachusetts at Boston and later with the Boston Adult Literacy Fund to develop, implement, and evaluate a project designed to train immigrants and refugees as adult ESL and native language literacy instructors in their own communities.

What is the 'from the community-to the community' model?

	The model described in this Guidebook has several key features:
community leadership development	Immigrants and refugees from the communities of the learners are trained to teach ESL and literacy in their own communities. Outstanding language minority adult literacy teachers are trained as Mentors; they, in turn, participate in training immigrant and refugee Interns who have demonstrated commitment to their communities as adult students, community activists, or tutors. Thus, the project develops leaders who come from the community and go back to the community.
participatory approach to literacy instruction	The approach to teaching literacy is participatory. Adult learners participate in setting goals, identifying needs, choosing learning activities, and evaluating progress. The curriculum content focuses on the learners' experiences and concerns. Because the teachers come from the learners' communities, they are able to understand the social problems learners face and work with them to address these problems.
participatory approach to instructor training	Likewise, the approach to training Interns is participatory: Interns identify their goals and needs, shape the direction of the training and evaluate its usefulness. Training content is drawn from the interests, experiences and concerns of participants.
native language adult literacy	Adult immigrants and refugees who have little prior education and minimal literacy proficiency in their native language are taught basic literacy in their native language as a basis for ESL instruction. Once they have acquired basic literacy proficiency in their native language, they make the transition to ESL through bilingual literacy instruction.
collaboration	Community-based organizations work with each other and with a university so that they can learn from each other's experiences, share expertise and address common concerns collaboratively.

What was our Project?

The model described in this Guidebook is based largely on the work of the **Community Training for Adult and Family Literacy Project**, a project designed to train literacy instructors from immigrant and refugee communities to teach in their own communities. The project was a collaboration between three community-based agencies in the Boston area:

- **the Harborside Community Center** (HCS) in East Boston which serves a large Central American population;

- **the Haitian Multi-Service Center** (HMSC) in Dorchester which serves Haitian immigrants and refugees;

- **the Jackson-Mann Community School** (JMCS) in Allston which serves over 26 different nationality and language groups.

The project was funded by the National Institute for Literacy from the fall of 1992 to the fall of 93; the **Boston Adult Literacy Fund** (BALF), an organization which secures funding for the Boston adult literacy community, was the grant recipient and fiscal administrator for the Project. The Project Coordinator was a faculty member at the **University of Massachusetts at Boston** (UMass/ Boston), continuing a six year history of collaboration between the university and local community-based literacy sites.

Through the project, Mentors from each of the agencies worked with Interns from the communities of the learners. Training took place both at the sites and at UMass/Boston. The site-based component consisted of on-going mentoring in the classrooms and weekly teacher-sharing meetings. The university-based component consisted of bi-weekly workshops for all of the Interns and Mentors.

The adult literacy instruction at each of the sites was designed to meet specific needs of the surrounding communities. Since there is a growing population of Haitians and Central Americans with little prior education or literacy background in Dorchester and East Boston, the project provided initial literacy instruction in Haitian Creole at the HMSC and in Spanish at the HCS. Because of the diversity of language and literacy backgrounds at the JMCS, instruction focused on beginning ESL there. Thus, we were able to investigate the effectiveness of our model for both native language literacy and ESL instruction.

Who are we ?

Before we tell more of the story of our project, we need to say a little about who we are and what we believe. The 'we' in this book generally refers to the project staff, which included three Mentor Teachers (one from each of the sites) and the Project Coordinator. The Mentors are immigrants or refugees who come from the communities of the learners and share many experiences with them. Although the stories of the Mentors are told in more depth in Chapter Three, we'll introduce ourselves briefly here to give you a sense of our backgrounds:

- **Felipe Vaquerano,** the Mentor at Harborside, is Salvadoran. He began studying ESL at the JMCS in 1989 while working in a factory. He became an ESL intern in a previous literacy project in 1991 and went on to become the Mentor at Harborside in this project.

- **Julio Midy,** the Mentor at the HMSC, is Haitian. Like Felipe, he started working in a factory; he has been an ESL teacher at the HMSC since 1985, and was the Master Teacher for the Creole literacy component of a previous project.

- **Ana Zambrano,** the Mentor at the JMCS, is Colombian. Before coming to the U.S. in 1984, she was an adult literacy worker in Colombia. She started studying ESL in a church in East Boston. She has taught ESL for seven years, and was Master Teacher at the JMCS for a previous project.

- **Elsa Auerbach,** the Project Coordinator, is a North American whose parents were refugees from Germany. She too worked in a factory for several years before being hired as a part-time ESL teacher at UMass/Boston. She coordinated several other university-community collaborative projects.

The 'we' in this Guidebook also includes **Joanne Arnaud,** the Executive Director of BALF, who was very much a part of the project, as well as the Interns who were trained in the project. The Interns, like the Mentors, came from the communities of the learners and shared many of their background experiences. Most of them had been ESL students at the sites and/or at UMass. The Interns at HCS were Central American; those at the HMSC were Haitian; one of the Interns at the JMCS was Honduran and the other was Peruvian of Japanese descent.

What is our philosophy?

Although project staff had different backgrounds and experiences, through our work together, we came to share several basic beliefs about literacy education. These beliefs underlie the model and guided the training.

about the adult learners...	***We believe that the starting point for working with adult learners is respecting their knowledge and their experiences.*** When adults come to ESL or literacy classes, it's already uncomfortable for them, at their age, not to know how to read and write, or not to be able to express themselves in English. We believe it is important to show them their own capacity to learn by drawing out what they already know and using their stories and experiences to teach them. The message they get should be, "You may not know how to read and write but that doesn't mean you don't have something to offer."
about the teacher's role...	***We believe that the relationship between teachers and students must be one of mutual respect in which they each learn from each other.*** This means breaking away from the traditional approach in which the teacher knows everything and it is his/her job to *give* this knowledge to the students. If the teacher is seen as the only one with something to offer, learners will feel less comfortable.
about literacy	***We believe literacy practices vary according to cultures and social contexts.*** Literacy is more than just a set of discrete, mechanical skills or functional competencies. Teaching must take into account culture-specific ways of using and understanding literacy; it must focus not on isolated skills but on using literacy for significant purposes in learners' lives. Meaning is more important than form in literacy instruction.
about the goal of teaching...	***We believe that good literacy education means more than just teaching students to read and write.*** What is important is how they can use what they learn to get involved in things that affect their lives. Immigrants and refugees face many problems - being unable to find work, dealing with discrimination on the job, raising children in a new country, maintaining communication with their families at home, and more. We believe that education should enable participants to understand the social nature of these problems (which they often see as personal problems or inadequacies) and to work together in figuring out ways to address them.
about the content of classes	***We believe that students learn best when the content is related to their own experiences.*** They are able to do more when learning builds on what they know. This means that the curriculum comes from within the classroom. It draws on their own cultural and

personal histories: as such, the content doesn't have to only be related to life in the U.S.; it can also include telling, writing and reading stories about their own countries and cultures.

about family literacy

We believe that any literacy work that supports parents in their efforts to make a better life for their families is family literacy. Family literacy means much more than parents reading bedtime stories or helping children with homework; family literacy includes whatever strengthens communication within families and enables parents to advocate for family needs. Rather than imposing family literacy content through the instruction of particular practices or lessons, teachers should integrate family literacy concerns throughout the curriculum as they arise organically.

about the native language

We believe that students' first language should be seen as a resource - not an obstacle - for literacy or ESL acquisition. Beginning literacy students can use their existing oral language as the basis for learning how to read and write. They can use first language (L1) literacy as a bridge to ESL. In ESL classes, students can decide when and how to use their first language to support learning English.

about methods and materials...

We believe that a variety of methods and materials should be used in classes. Because of past experiences, learners (and sometimes Interns) may expect teacher-centered and textbook-based classes focusing on mechanical and rote learning. However, relevant, engaging instruction entails interaction, meaning-based activities, and learner-generated materials. Thus, to reconcile students' expectations and teachers' styles in an effective approach, traditional and non-traditional methods should be integrated.

about teachers...

We believe that people who share the culture, language and life experiences of the learners are uniquely qualified to teach them. A shared background can enable teachers to know what is relevant to students, how to make them feel comfortable, and how to draw out their concerns. We believe that these qualifications should be recognized and enhanced - highly committed immigrants and refugees who don't have credentials (or can't afford higher education), should be given the opportunity to utilize and develop their skills.

about training

We believe that teacher training should be participatory. The knowledge and experience of Interns should be an integral part of training. As such, our view of training is similar to our view of teaching. Mentors and Interns should learn from each other so that everyone's expertise is valued. Training should emphasize dialogue, sharing, and investigation, rather than the transmission of knowledge or prescription of teaching practices. The content of workshops should build on what is happening in the classes and on prior discussions.

Why did we write this Guidebook and who is it for?

The first thing we should say about our model is that it is nothing new! The ideas of participatory literacy education and native language adult literacy are widely accepted in many parts of the world, especially in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. In particular, the idea that teachers should come from the communities of the learners is the basis for most literacy campaigns around the world. It is only in the U.S. (and other industrialized countries) that this practice is not the norm. Thus, one of our main goals is to make this model more accessible in the U.S.

to tell our story...

The first purpose of this Guidebook is to tell the story of how we adapted and implemented this model on a small scale in a North American context. In it, we have compiled and evaluated our own experiences, not just to satisfy our funders, but to give other teachers and programs the chance to see what we did, what worked well, and what didn't. We were fortunate that, in this case, the funding agency itself (the National Institute for Literacy) suggested that grant recipients write a final report that would be useful to practitioners. We see the Guidebook as a way to present our communities to the outside, especially to other education centers and people who are doing the same job we are doing.

to provide guidance..

Thus, in addition to presenting what we have done, we hope that it will be a reference for teachers, to help you serve your students better. We hope that others who are considering implementing a similar training project will use our experience as a guide. However, as Julio said, the Guidebook is not a Bible - we don't assume you will agree with or follow what we've written. Each teaching context is different and no one can tell someone else what to do in his/her situation. The paradox of planning is that you can't actually know what to do until you listen - until you're in the situation with the people that you'll be working with, learning about their living situations, histories and hopes. That's why much of the report is written in the past tense: we think it is more helpful to tell you what we *did* than what you *should do.*

to advocate for resources..

The Guidebook also has another purpose (maybe ultimately its most important one!) and that is to convince funders and policy makers that this is a powerful model for addressing the literacy needs of immigrant and refugee adults so that they will commit more resources to it. For this reason, we have not only evaluated the particular work of this project, but incorporated evidence from similar projects which indicate its potential.

How was this Guidebook written?

While the focus of this Guidebook is the Community Training for Adult and Family Literacy Project (CTAFL), it incorporates experiences that go beyond the time frame of one project. All of the project staff had worked together in a prior collaboration, the Bilingual Community Literacy Training Project (BCLTP), which was founded on the same philosophy and principles. Since there were differences in the structure and scope of the two projects, we decided to include results of our work in both in order to incorporate the broadest possible base of knowledge and data. Although the one year time frame of the CTAFL limited what we could do, the wealth of experience from the prior project allowed us to compare what worked and what didn't in each. The lessons we learned in that project, and the lessons we learned in writing about it, are very much a part of this Guidebook.

the process

One of the principles of a participatory process is that everyone's voice and contributions are valued. In order for the voice in any documentation such as this to be truly authentic, each participant or participating agency would have to write about their own work. In fact, frequently outsiders have written about the work at participating sites, leaving site staff feeling that their voices were not represented. Although everyone on the staff of our project agreed in principle that it would be desirable for sites to write about their own practice, no one felt it was entirely feasible, given the constraints of time, funding, and experience. On the one hand, Mentors felt that any time spent writing should be paid; on the other, they felt that their priorities were teaching (if money were available, it should be spent on services for students). In addition, the notion that only site representatives can write about the project obscures the collaborative nature of the project - much of what we did, we did together, in joint work.

We addressed this dilemma about voice by trying to make the writing process as participatory as possible, even though one person (Elsa) did the actual writing. We started by looking at a range of models of final reports and literacy training guidebooks; each Mentor reported on features that he/she liked from the samples. Then, the Mentors generated a list of questions that practitioners and policy-makers might ask about our project (these are the questions that form headings in each chapter). We then had a series of meetings in which we discussed each of the questions as a group, with everyone contributing what he/she thought should be included in that section. Elsa took minutes of those discussions, recording participants' actual words, and used what was said as the basis for each section. Elsa then wrote drafts which incorporated these discussions, as well as documentation that had been collected throughout the project. This documentation included:

- minutes of meetings: We had detailed minutes of core staff meetings, training workshops, and teacher-sharing meetings; these minutes recorded the actual words of Mentors and Interns.

- samples of work: We collected samples of Interns', Mentors', and students' work throughout the project. These included lesson plans, writings, reports of discussions, etc. Since many of the samples of learners' work that were collected throughout the project include reflections on their own learning, their voices are also represented through these writings.

- interviews: Interns and Mentors interviewed each other at the beginning and end of the project. Interns also interviewed selected learners at the end of the project.

- evaluation results: We used a variety of evaluation tools (site surveys, anecdotes, student profiles, etc.) whose results are included.

The drafts were then distributed to project staff, as well as the BALF Director and interested Education Coordinators at the sites. Everyone gave feedback which was discussed and incorporated into the final version. The participatory nature of this process broke down to some extent as the deadline for submission of the report drew near: there wasn't enough time for the final chapters to be fully discussed by the group. In addition, some suggested revisions were not submitted in time to be included. Of course, since the report was due three months after the funding ended, the many hours of meeting and discussion (as well as the writing of the report) were largely done on an unpaid basis.

the language

In writing this report, we faced several challenges. The first was how to present findings in a way that adhered to the conventions of final research reports and, at the same time, present them in a way that is useful for practitioners. If an evaluation is technical and quantitative, or uses a very academic discourse style, it may exclude many potential readers. In our report of the first project, we used somewhat academic language at times because we felt this would legitimate our findings to funders and policy makers. Because the purpose of this report is to popularize the model, we have chosen to use a colloquial and less academic style.

A related challenge was how to write this report in a clear and accessible way while at the same time capturing the richness and complexity of the issues we addressed. How could our writing be simple without being simplistic? How could it be usable without being prescriptive? How could it be straightforward without being mechanical? In addition to using a colloquial writing style, we have tried to address these concerns by including many examples from our practice. Whenever we suggest a particular tool, activity or procedure, we try to include an account of our experience with it and reflections on how it went for us.

A third challenge was how to present our project in its most positive light (since our ultimate goal is to advocate for the expansion of this model) and, at the same time, present it in its full complexity. Like anyone involved in a demonstration project, we want to show how successful our work has been because we believe so strongly in the power of this model. But we also want to be honest because this is what will be most useful to others. How often, when we read about other projects, do we think, "It sounds wonderful, but I wonder what really happened?" We often feel constrained to write about the ideal - to make our work sound unproblematic even though, as any practitioner knows, there are always difficulties and limitations as well as contextual factors which shape the outcomes. This report tries to present both the power of our model and the challenges we faced implementing it.

the product

Another dilemma concerned the product of our work. Research reports often frame conclusions in terms of outcomes; training projects often frame them in terms of training packages or curricula. However, because every teaching context is different, we didn't feel it would be appropriate to prescribe a single, predetermined training design. We did, however, arrive at generalizable conclusions and identify significant implications of our work. Thus, the focus in this report will be in terms of the processes of the development of our model - looking at why we did what we did, at how our thinking and practice developed, and at how we made sense of participants' reactions. Issues and contradictions we faced along the way will be integrated throughout the report, because it was the struggle with these issues that was the real motor force of the project, helping us to clarify our perspective and arrive at our conclusions.

How is this Guidebook organized?

The Guidebook has two major parts: Part I tells the story of our project; Part II presents specific training activities or modules which we used with Interns and which others might adapt for their own training projects. Part II will be available under separate cover at a later date.

Chapter One presents the background of the project, starting with **the context at participating sites**, explaining why and how they became involved with this model. It then presents **the rationale for the project design**, including a brief explanation of the key features of the project, where the ideas for this design came from, how they are supported within a broader framework of theory, research and practice, and how we translated them into project objectives.

Chapter Two, the overview of the **project structure and participants**, looks at how the collaboration was set up and administered, how the training was structured, who the participants were, and how they were selected.

Chapter Three presents a description of the **training** of Interns, including our general approach, what we did within each training component (workshops, teacher-sharing meetings, and Mentoring), and issues that emerged in the process.

Chapter Four presents a brief overview of the relationship between the training and what actually happened in the **ESL and literacy classes;** it also addresses teaching issues that emerged from practice.

Chapter Five focuses on project **evaluation** - our approach, plan and evaluation tools. It discusses the process of evaluation and how the design changed. It goes on to present results of the evaluation, discussing the **impact of the project** on Mentors, Interns, learners and sites.

The Conclusion summarizes our **findings** regarding each of the key characteristics of the 'from the community-to-the-community' model. In addition, it examines **dilemmas and challenges** we faced and includes **recommendations** for the field of adult literacy, discussing the broader potential of this model and what is necessary to realize it.

The Appendices include sample start-up materials, workshop minutes, and evaluation tools.

Some notes on terminology

native language	We use the term native language to refer to learners' first language or mother tongue - the language that is primary for them. The terms *native language, first language,* and *mother tongue* have different connotations in various parts of the world and to different people. In this report, we use them interchangeably. In the context of our work, some Haitian Creole speakers and some Spanish speakers were placed in native language literacy classes because they had minimal prior education and did not have a basis of first or native language literacy; the rationale for this model is explained in Chapter One.
L1 and L2	L1 is used to refer to someone's first or native language; L2 is used to refer to someone's second language (which, in the case of our project, was usually English).
Creole Kreyol	Although there are many kinds of Creole used in the Boston area (Cape Verdean Creole, Jamaican Creole, etc.), Haitian Creole was the only one used in our project; for this reason, when we use the term "Creole" in this report (eg. "the Creole literacy classes"), we are referring to Haitian Creole. We have not used the Haitian spelling, Kreyol, since the report is in English.
training	The grant is called a training grant because this is the commonly accepted way of describing short-term programs for teaching specific vocationally-oriented content. However, we are uncomfortable with this term because it often connotes transmitting specific skills or techniques; our approach focused much more on drawing out group knowledge and sharing experience than on transmitting a particular method or technique. Our goal was not that participants would 'master' a pre-determined body of knowledge or teaching competencies, but that they would develop a stance or approach to teaching. We use the term training because we haven't found a better one, but don't view it in mechanical way.

Chapter One: The Context and Rationale

The idea for the Community Training for Adult and Family Literacy Project did not fall from the sky or emerge from an ivory tower: it was a response to realities confronting the communities of the participating sites and was based on a history of practice at the sites. Its impetus and rationale came from the sites' specific needs and it built on initiatives that they had already undertaken to address those needs. This chapter looks at the contexts at the sites, the history of the project, and the reasons for its design. The **so what?** *sections highlight implications of our particular experience for others undertaking similar projects.*

the contexts at the sites

The sites have many commonalities. Each has deep and long-standing roots in the community where it is situated; the sites are well known among local immigrants and refugees and have long waiting lists for classes. Each has had an adult education program for at least ten years and has participated actively in the adult literacy community in the Greater Boston area. They provide a range of services in addition to ESL classes, from counseling to childcare, and, in some cases, health care, and legal services.

In addition, the sites share a commitment to developing the leadership of people from the communities of the learners and to expanding services for learners with minimal prior education and literacy backgrounds. Before we began working together, each had begun developing this model, but had not had sufficient financial or structural support to sustain these efforts independently. The collaboration, thus, became a vehicle for continuing initiatives already under way at the sites.

At the same time, however, the conditions at the sites are quite different in terms of the backgrounds of students they serve, the kinds of services they offer, the internal structures of the sites, and the relations of the sites to the learners' communities. The project component at each site was tailored to fit the needs of students within its community. This background information is included here because, as with any project, the context is critical in shaping the content, direction, and outcomes.

so what?

Thus, our experience suggests that collaborations need to both provide a common framework for participating sites (based on their shared needs and vision for training and instruction) and, at the same time, respond to site-specific conditions. Balancing the tension between common purposes and particular conditions is precisely the challenge of collaboration - the challenge of adapting commonly-held principles and processes to differing contexts.

East Boston Harborside Community Center Adult Literacy Program

The most striking characteristic of the context of the Harborside Program is the rapidly changing demographic situation in East Boston, where it is located. According to the Hispanic Office of Planning and Evaluation, the growth rate for Hispanics in the state of Massachusetts between 1970 and 1980 was 11 times faster than that of whites and five times faster than that of blacks; Hispanics accounted for 67% of the total population growth in the state during that period; 22% of the population in East Boston are refugees and immigrants, many of them recent arrivals from Central America with limited English language abilities and few economic resources. Hispanic families have the highest poverty rate of any group in the area. An estimated 20% of the Hispanic adults who seek educational services have less than a fourth grade education and are minimally literate in Spanish.

The Harborside Community Center (HCC) offers the only free ESL classes in East Boston. Its Adult Literacy Program has been offering basic education services since 1983. It provides four levels of ESL classes, as well as ABE reading, writing and math - from basic literacy levels through high school equivalency. There are over three hundred adult literacy students enrolled in it annually who come from many ethnic, linguistic, racial and class backgrounds; of these, 34% are Hispanic. Thus, while the learner population at Harborside is a mixed one, and the agency serves many different ethnic groups, it is clearly the central place in East Boston that Hispanics go for educational services. The HCC also offers a range of other programs including After School Day Care, After School Reading, Community Counseling, Peer Leadership, summer camps, and, most recently, a program aimed at giving East Boston youth a safe place to go after school where they can study, meet other teens and work on projects that give something back to the community.

The Harborside Adult Learning Program (ALP) is committed to multi-cultural, participatory adult education in which the content of classes is driven by the interests, experiences and community concerns of learners. Part of its mission is to "utilize participatory classroom activities and curricula which encourage our students to use their personal experiences and goals as the basis for a meaningful learning experience." The HCC has a history of training, hiring and promoting staff from the communities of the learners. The staff has included several language minority ESL teachers; in addition, bilingual aides and bilingual volunteer tutors have assisted in classrooms for many years.

The Haitian Multi-Service Center

Over the past decade there has been an exceptionally rapid growth of Haitians living in the greater Boston area, making it presently one of the largest Haitian population centers in U.S. (following Miami and New York). Current estimates place the Haitian population in the state at over 60,000; the majority of Haitians - up to 25,000 - live in the Dorchester and Mattapan areas of Boston. Despite this continuing increase, the HMSC is the only social service agency that provides educational and social services specifically targeted for the Haitian community in Boston. It is located geographically in the heart of this community. It is the largest human service agency serving Haitians in Massachusetts.

The mission of the HMSC is based on a "Haitians serving Haitians" model; it provides human and educational services as well as promoting community development and leadership in a culturally and linguistically familiar context. It has a broad range of services; in addition to adult education, it provides pre-school, pre-natal care, AIDS outreach and education, refugee resettlement, legal services, family counseling, and translation services. Adult education is its largest component, serving over 300 students daily in 18 classes. The waiting period for regular classes is up to three years and the waiting list numbers over 400 students.

The Adult Education Program provides morning, afternoon and evening classes. It includes two levels of Kreyol (Creole) literacy, four levels of ESL and a high school diploma program Trhough the Massachusetts English Literacy Demonstration Project (MELD), the HMSC provides an advanced reading and writing class to transition students from ESL to high school diploma and a college credit reading, writing and math class through Roxbury Community College. The HMSC Study Center provides a compter lab available for all classes, elective classes in math and conversation and program development support for teachers to explore ways to integrate math, science and technology in the curriculum.

The HMSC has been committed to the hiring of bilingual/bicultural staff since its inception. In the mid-1980's, the Adult Education Program established a two-year Bilingual Teacher Training Project to address the need for increased recruitment, training and hiring of bilingual Haitian teachers in adult education. In addition, the HMSC has worked extensively with local colleges and universities to recruit Haitian undergraduates for intership and work-study positions; it was instrumental in establishing the Student Literacy Corps at UMass/Boston. Students at the HMSC are also encouraged to take on responsibilities within the program and are often hired to teach or administer Study Center activities.

The Jackson-Mann Community School

The primary difference between the Jackson-Mann Community School and the other project sites is the incredible diversity of ethnic and linguistic groups represented in its classes. According to the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) Boston Household Survey for 1985, 20% of households in Allston-Brighton identify a language other than English as their primary language; early indications from the 1990 Census suggest that this percentage is growing. Allston-Brighton is home to 28% of all Hispanics living in Boston, 43% of the city's Russian residents, 26% of the people from other Eastern European countries, 30% of Boston's Asian community and 15% its Brazilian population. The population served in Allston-Brighton is predominantly low-income, including local public housing residents, AFDC recipients, and the working poor. Although many of the students in the program hold jobs (and some hold more than one job at a time), most are low-wage, entry level jobs: housekeeping, janitorial, cooking and counter positions in fast food restaurants, and assembly line jobs.

The classes at the JMCS reflect the diversity of the area's population: the program serves 450 students per year who come from 25 to 30 different ethnic groups. An estimated 5% of the adults in the ESL classes have less than a fourth grade education in their home countries. Thus, at this site, the need is more for beginning ESL than for first language literacy; further, since classes are linguistically mixed, ESL is the only viable option for the immigrant and refugee learners. The program has four components: ESL, ABE, GED, and EDP (an External Degree Program for high school equivalency). Because many of the students are employed, most of the classes are held at night at the JMCS.

There are over 400 adults on the waiting list to get into ESL classes. The JMCS has never had to actively recruit students since it is well-known among immigrant and refugee communities as a center that offers free quality ESL classes. In addition, the issue of waiting list length has been addressed by having class sizes of up to 30 and involving students as much as possible in assisting teachers and working with other students.

The JMCS has a long history of promoting leadership from within the learners' communities. It has had advocacy training projects to develop students as community activists. It has hired language minority teachers and teaching assistants. Students have produced a magazine and been involved in various aspects of program governance (including a student council.

What was the history of the project?

It was these conditions at the sites that gave rise to the ideas underlying the Community Training for Adult and Family Literacy Project. As the following account indicates, the basis for the project was already in place long before it actually began.

needs identified

In the mid-1980's, a group of community-based agencies in the Boston area had identified the need to diversify the adult education workforce (which had been predominantly made up of white, Anglo North Americans with undergraduate and/or graduate degrees) and to train instructors from the learners' communities. With resources limited, many programs were seeking additional ways to continue providing services for incoming students while at the same time, increasing opportunities for advanced students who had completed existing courses. The idea of training exceptional students to become instructors for lower levels was seen as a way of providing a 'step up' for them as well as addressing the demand for increased services and a multi-cultural workforce.

In addition, a growing need for first language literacy had been identified. At Harborside, a previously hidden population of immigrants with limited educational and literacy backgrounds (many of whom were Central American) began to enroll in classes in order to meet requirements for amnesty; these were students who had been too intimidated to come to a school setting until they were required to do so for legalization purposes. It had become increasingly clear to their teachers that students who didn't know how to read and write in their first language were struggling (and often failing) in ESL classes. The existing ESL classes were unable to meet their needs and the few places that taught literacy in Spanish required students to pay for these services. Thus, the Harborside saw the need to start a Spanish literacy component for the growing numbers of learners who might otherwise have been relegated to the waiting lists or never come for classes at all.

The HMSC had been providing Kreyol (Creole) literacy instruction since 1984 and was interested in expanding this component. In the mid-1980's, through a collaboration with Roxbury Community College, the HMSC provided workshops in Kreyol linguistics for teachers and college interns. Attitudes toward Creole were changing since it had become the official language in Haiti after the fall of Duvalier. A Creole linguistics course at UMass/Boston fostered this interest. Further, a growing number of refugees was coming to Boston as a result of political and economic instability in Haiti; many of them had had no opportunity for education in Haiti and needed basic literacy instruction.

projects initiated

As a result of all of these conditions, a number of projects were initiated by community-based organizations during the 1980's:

- **The Boston Adult Literacy Fund** secured funding for a city-wide pilot project to train people from the communities of the learners as teaching and administrative assistants.

- **The Haitian Multi-Service Center** developed and implemented a Bilingual Teacher Training Project to recruit, train, and hire Haitian teachers in its Adult Education Program in the mid 1980's. At the same time, the HMSC actively recruited bilingual interns and work-study students from local colleges and universities as tutors and teaching assistants. As a result of this work, an increasing percentage of the staff was Haitian and included college interns and program graduates. In addition, the HMSC initiated Creole literacy instruction under the guidance of a volunteer.

- **The Jackson-Mann Community School** had received a grant to train advanced students to become community educators for employment and housing issues.

- **The Harborside Community Center** hired a bilingual ESL teacher and a Cambodian teaching assistant to teach a bilingual Cambodian ESL class.

- **The Jackson-Mann Community School and the University of Massachusetts at Boston** worked with two other community-based agencies (the Community Learning Center and El Centro del Cardenal) in the English Family Literacy Project which included Spanish literacy instruction taught by a Bolivian teacher.

Despite the great need for these programs and their many successes, there was little financial or structural support for them. Although funding agencies and policy makers often paid lip service to the importance of diversifying the field and promoting leadership from within minority communities, they did little to concretely follow up on these goals. Many other L1 classes around the city were taught by volunteers, who, in many cases, had no training; funding and logistical support (space, materials, planning time, etc.) for these classes was inadequate or non-existent. As a result, despite their successes, these initiatives were often unstable, lasting a few months, with frequent teacher and student turnover. At the same time, it was clear that the number of students who were unable to succeed in regular ESL classes because of L1 literacy limitations was growing.

collaboration initiated (BCLTP)

It was at this point that the idea for a university-community collaboration to train community interns arose. The HMSC and the JMCS, interested in stabilizing and expanding initiatives that they had already begun, worked with UMass/Boston to secure funding from the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs for a project to train community Interns. This project, the Bilingual Community Literacy Training Project (BCLTP), focused on three kinds of literacy classes in accordance with the conditions at the sites: Haitian Creole at the HMSC (as well as ESL), Spanish literacy at the HCC, and ESL at the JMCS. It was a three-year project that involved monthly training workshops, weekly site-based teacher sharing meetings, and mentoring. Up to sixteen Interns were trained each year.

collaboration continued (CTAFL)

It was with this history of joint work that the sites embarked on the National Institute for Literacy project. As the end of the BCLTP approached, the participating sites felt that its impact had been so positive that they wanted to continue the collaboration and to advocate for the model more widely. The three sites decided to work with the Boston Adult Literacy Fund in seeking further funding from the National Institute for Literacy.

The new project was similar to the BCLTP in terms of the overall model, approach, and rationale; however, it differed in terms of time frame, scope, and training design. Specifically, the CATFL was a one year project rather than three years; training workshops were conducted on a bi-weekly basis rather than a monthly basis; site-based teacher-sharing meetings were more informal; and six Interns (two from each site) rather than twelve (four from each site) were trained. In addition, its objectives explicitly included a focus on family literacy in the training.

The fact that the projects differed in these ways shaped the content and the outcomes of the two projects, allowing us to evaluate the effectiveness of various design factors in each. These differences are evaluated more extensively later in the Guidebook because of their implications for others undertaking this kind of work. We include information about both projects because our experience with each enriches the knowledge base about the 'from the community-to the community' model (thus, the term 'model' refers to both projects).

What were the objectives and key features of the project?

Based on the needs identified by the sites and the priorities of the funders, we identified the following objectives and key features in our proposal for the CTAFL project:

objectives

- to recruit and provide opportunities for professional development for teachers and Interns from underserved ethnic minority groups;
- to develop a multi-faceted, practice-oriented model for training community Interns to teach adult and family literacy based on recent adult literacy research and theory;
- to train a core group of bilingual Mentors to supervise on-site training and model teaching to community Interns;
- to train a core group of bilingual community Interns to become instructors of adult and family literacy;
- to facilitate the development of the literacy proficiency of non-English speaking adults, including parents of bilingual students, increasing their educational attainment, their ability to function in ESL classes and their ability to support the literacy development of their children;
- to build the capacity of community-based literacy programs serving the needs of adult ESL and literacy students;
- to disseminate the model so that it can be replicated and implemented on a nation-wide basis.

key features

Underlying these objectives were four key features of the model:

- **a meaning-based, culturally variable view of literacy**
- **a participatory approach** to literacy instruction and teacher training
- **native language** literacy for adult learners with little prior schooling
- **training and leadership development** of community instructors.

How is this model supported by theory and research?

Although the rationale for our model arose directly from the concrete conditions, needs, and initiatives at the sites, we were by no means alone in arriving at these conclusions. There is substantial justification for each of the key features of the model from a wide range of other sources. This support comes from language acquisition and literacy theory and research, as well as from the work of other practitioners and projects both nationally and Internationally. The next sections will briefly examine some of the research, theory, and practice, indicating why each of these features is educationally sound.

Why a meaning-based, culturally variable view of literacy?

cultural variability in literacy practices

The past decade has seen advances in the theoretical understanding of the nature of literacy, and, in particular, of the ways it varies according to culture and context. Studies of literacy practices in a range of cultures indicate variation in types of texts, participant interactions around texts, purposes for creating and using texts, social meanings/values attached to texts, ways of producing texts, and ways of socializing children through interactions with texts.[1] A new paradigm has emerged in which literacy is viewed not just as a set of isolated decoding skills, to be acquired in an essentially similar universal process, but rather as a set of social practices which vary according to cultures, contexts, purposes, and participants. This means that culture-specific aspects of language and literacy use must be taken into account in literacy programming and curriculum development; teachers must be aware of culture-specific discourse practices, literacy uses and forms of learners' cultures wherever possible.

connections between oral and written language

Another aspect of this emerging paradigm is that, increasingly, the divide between oral and written language has come to be questioned. Older views claimed that literacy was unique in that it allowed meaning to be represented autonomously, without reference to context; recent studies show that in fact, there are many features of what has traditionally been thought of as oral discourse in written language and vice versa[2]. A new conception of *literacies* has emerged in which a variety of discourse forms are seen to encompass a range of features of both oral and written language. Culture-specific uses of oral language shape the way that learners take and make meaning through texts. Teachers must draw on learners' oral language practices in developing their reading and writing.

literacy acquisition as a meaning-making process

Further, this paradigm claims that literacy acquisition involves not just mechanically connecting the spoken word with an abstract symbol system, but making meaning by interacting with texts. Reading and learning to read are active, constructive processes, as are writing and learning to write: learners bring their own knowledge to texts in order to make sense of them. Again, culture plays a role in learning: learners' cultural familiarity with the content and forms of texts shape their reading processes. Learners become proficient to the extent that instruction is connected to their background knowledge, life experiences, and communicative purposes[3]. Traditional approaches which focus on the individual's acquisition of skills without consideration of social context disconnect literacy acquisition from learners' knowledge and lived experience. Thus, it is critical that instruction be meaning-centered, rather than mechanical, and that content be relevant to the life experiences of learners.

connections between the word and the world

Current literacy theory suggests that literacy is meaningful for learners to the extent that it enables them to better understand and shape their world. As Brazilian educator Paulo Freire says, there must be a connection between the word and the world.[4] Mechanical approaches which focus on the acquisition of isolated skills without consideration of the social conditions of learners' lives disconnect literacy acquisition from their knowledge, concerns, and experiences. As literacy educator Susan Lytle says, "being and becoming literate means using knowledge and experience to make sense of and act on the world."[5] In the approach proposed by Freire, instruction starts with learners' social reality, providing a context for analyzing it and taking action on it. If literacy acquisition is linked with this kind of critical analysis, it can enable learners to challenge the social conditions that disempower them. Thus, literacy instruction should involve exploration of the social issues and concerns of learners' lives.[6]

so what?

Findings from this theoretical and practical work suggest that:

•Training must explore various conceptions of literacy: participants (both Interns and Mentors) must be invited to make their own views of literacy and literacy acquisition explicit. Training should also explore ways of connecting literacy instruction to issues of importance in learners' lives.

•Similarly, work with students should involve dialogue about their conceptions of literacy, their prior learning experiences; literacy instruction should incorporate culturally familiar literacy forms and practices, building on learners' oral language resources.

Why a participatory approach?

adult learning theory

The view of literacy outlined above is congruent with recent perspectives from adult learning theory which suggest that adults learn best when instruction is contextualized in their life experiences, related to learners' real needs, and when students are involved in determining instructional goals and content[7]. Their goals and purposes for reading and writing can be expected to vary according to individual and social contexts. Thus, adult learning theory, like literacy theory, suggests that the content of instruction should be linked to meaningful, authentic language and literacy use (rather than focusing on abstract, decontextualized decoding skills or generic topics). It must reflect students' everyday reality so that literacy becomes a tool which can enable learners to understand and change their lives.

curriculum theory

In order to implement this goal, the traditional concept of curriculum development must be abandoned; in the traditional model, the teacher identifies the items (eg., skills, grammar, competencies) to be covered in a course before ever coming in contact with students; instruction then is a process of finding the most efficient way of transmitting this information from teacher to students. In place of this model, the concept of learner-centered and emergent curriculum development is becoming increasingly widespread. The new model involves collaborative discovery of learners' goals and concerns[8]. This collaboration involves constant dialogue and negotiation at every step of the way. Chris Candlin, a curriculum theorist, describes this as an interactive syllabus model

> ...which is social and problem-solving in orientation rather than one which transmits preselected and often predigested knowledge. The model thus becomes one in which participants, both teachers and learners, are encouraged to ask questions from the outset about syllabus objectives, content, methodology and experiences...[9]

adult ESL educators' practice

North American adult ESL educators have extended this learner-centered model to include content specifically focused on the social context of learners' lives, combining Freire's approach to literacy pedagogy with the emergent approach to ESL curriculum development.[10] This participatory model for adult ESL literacy offers a systematic process for building curriculum around learners' lived experiences and social realities. As one of the Interns in our project said, in this model, ***"The students' lives are the curriculum."***

This participatory curriculum development process developed through this practice involves moving toward a model with the following components:

- **Investigation and identification of themes:** Teachers investigate the social conditions of learners' lives in order to identify their concerns and goals with them.

- **Re-presentation and dialogue:** As teachers discover what is important in learners' lives, they create or select materials to present the themes back to students as lesson content. Participants then discuss these issues in terms of how they have experienced the problems, their root or social causes, and possible strategies for addressing them.

- **Extension:** A range of tools are utilized to extend language and literacy proficiency, exploring these issues as the content of instruction. Materials and learning activities (language experience stories, grammar and vocabulary work, reading and writing, role plays, etc.) focus on the issues.

- **Action:** Students apply what they have learned inside the classroom to address concerns outside the classroom.

- **Evaluation:** The class evaluates the learning process and the actions they have taken.

Of course, the challenge is adapting this model to particular groups of students. When the social context of learners' lives is incorporated in instruction, relevance is ensured. As students participate in identifying themes that are important to them, in developing learning tools they will use, and in evaluating what they have learned, they gain a measure of control over their own learning which extends to their lives outside the classroom.

so what?

Findings from this theoretical and practical work indicate that:

- Adult learners should be involved in curriculum development at every stage of the process, from deciding the content, methods and processes of instruction to participating in evaluation.

- Curriculum content for adults (whether in a training or literacy instruction context) must incorporate the realities, concerns and goals of participants.

Why native language literacy and bilingual transitional ESL?

The theoretical framework outlined above suggests that oral language should be used as much as possible as a bridge to literacy. This means that teachers must be able to draw on learners' linguistic resources in a culturally appropriate way, to the extent possible, and teach literacy through oral language usage. Further, research on ESL literacy acquisition indicates that strong first language literacy and schooling are key factors in second language/literacy acquisition.[11] While this is a widely accepted finding for children's literacy acquisition (and, in fact, has been the basis for the bilingual education movement), it has been less widely accepted for adult literacy acquisition. Adult ESL literacy research, however, indicates that it is equally relevant for low-literate non-English speaking adults[12]. It is relevant first because of the difficulties that adult learners face when they try to learn English without being literate in their first language, and, second, because of the positive consequences for literacy and ESL acquisition when they start with L1 literacy classes.

A number of studies document the difficulties of adult ESL students with minimal first language literacy proficiency. They indicate that people who are not literate in their first language are at a double disadvantage: on the one hand, ESL literacy programs often turn them away because their oral English is not adequate and, on the other hand, they often have difficulty functioning in or benefitting from ESL classes because these classes assume literacy.

- Klassen found that, without first language literacy, ESL classes were virtually inaccessible to Spanish-speaking adult learners. Students in monolingual ESL classes reported that they had no idea what was going on in their classes; they responded by becoming completely silenced, making virtually no progress or dropping out. The lack of English, in turn, affected their ability to find jobs, to support their children's schooling, and had important negative implications for their self-esteem.[13]

- Strei found that those with little L1 literacy background and schooling (whether from Spanish-speaking or another linguistic background) are often caught in a "revolving door syndrome" in which learners start a course, fail, start again and eventually give up.[14]

Likewise, there is strong evidence showing that first language literacy is critical to economic and political participation, as well as to the acquisition of English literacy.

- Studies by Vargas and Wiley indicate that those who are literate in their first language (even if they are not literate in English) have advantages over those who are not functionally literate in either language in terms of economic success, political participation and employment. [15]

For these reasons, adult educators are increasingly advocating L1 literacy instruction as a basis for ESL acquisition for adult learners with little prior education and bilingual ESL instruction for those with slightly more L1 literacy. Although these L1 literacy programs are still few and far between in the U.S., practitioners, researchers and learners involved in them report positive results.[16]

The first benefit of such programs at the beginning levels is that they attract and retain previously unserved students. These include students who had been unable to participate in ESL classes because of limited first language literacy and schooling: students who report having dropped out of ESL classes come back to classes when first language literacy is offered.

- Strei reports that a pilot native language literacy program for Haitians in Palm Beach County dramatically increased their retention rate once they enrolled in ESOL classes: the drop-out rate decreased from 85% prior to the program to only 10% after it was started.[17]

- Teachers at Centro Presente, a program for Central Americans in Cambridge offering bilingual ESL, report that many of their current students had previously dropped out of monolingual ESL classes.

A second benefit of using the L1 is that it reduces affective barriers to English acquisition, and thus allows for more rapid progress.

- Hemmindinger found that a bilingual approach to ESL for non-literate and non-schooled Hmong refugees was more effective than monolingual approaches had been; while students made almost no progress in two to three years of monolingual survival ESL classes, once a Freirean bilingual approach was introduced, progress was rapid. She attributes this in part to the fact that the bilingual approach allowed for language and culture shock to be alleviated.[18]

- D'Annunzio reports that non-literate Cambodians made rapid gains in ESL in a program involving "pedagogically unsophisticated" bilingual tutors. Despite a relatively short total instructional time, highly significant results were attained in speaking, reading and vocabulary, as indicated by pre- and post-test scores on a number of standardized tests, portfolio analysis, and ongoing informal assessment.[19]

- Teachers at Centro Presente report that use of the L1 naturally gives way to increasing use of English. They claim that since students don't just start by thinking in the L2, allowing for the exploration of ideas in the L1 supports a gradual, developmental process in which use of the L1 drops off naturally as it becomes less necessary.

- Garcia's research on effective instructional practices found that academically successful students made the transition from Spanish to English without any pressure from teachers and were able to progress systematically from writing in the native language in initial literacy to writing in English later.[20]

A third benefit of native language literacy instruction is that it promotes a meaning-based conception of literacy among learners. Starting with the L1 reduces anxiety and enhances the affective environment for learning, takes into account socio-cultural factors, facilitates incorporation of learners' life experiences, and allows for learner-centered curriculum development. Most importantly, it allows for language to be used as a meaning-making tool and for language learning to become a means of communicating ideas rather than an end in itself. As such, it is congruent with current theories of language acquisition, literacy and adult learning.

so what?

Findings from this theoretical and practical work indicate that:

- Literacy in the first language is an essential resource for the transition to second language literacy for low-literate adults.

- Where possible and as needed, native language literacy classes and bilingual transitional ESL classes should be offered for these adults.

- Knowledge of the learners' first languages should be considered an important teaching qualification.

Why literacy teachers from the communities of the learners?

The final feature of our project which fits with a social-contextual view of literacy and a participatory approach to adult education is its focus on training people from the communities of the learners as teachers. Although the idea of hiring teachers who do not have either traditional higher education or teaching credentials may seem unusual in the U.S. context, it is not uncommon in other parts of the world.

- In the early sixties, a classic study of Spanish literacy acquisition among Mexican Indians found that learners taught by Indians from their own community with little pedagogical training learned to read in both the vernacular and in Spanish better than did those taught by native Spanish speakers from the dominant culture with more pedagogical training[21].

- Many of the mass literacy campaigns of third world countries are based on the principle that people who know a little more can teach people who know a little less. International organizations like UNESCO promote the strategy of relying on these non-traditional teachers as the main way of addressing widespread illiteracy.

- In Nicaragua, for example, it was the shortage of teachers which initially prompted the campaign to train people who had themselves just learned to read and write to become literacy workers. According to Fernando Cardenal, the Director of the literacy campaign and a poet, this decision "came really out of the pressure of not knowing at that point exactly what to do. But we put our trust in the people and the extraordinary result was that it was incredibly successful and most of these people became very good teachers" . In fact, the literacy workers' lack of traditional background was an advantage: they had shared the experiences of the learners and could say, "Look, I learned... so can you." The literacy workers' insecurity, lack of professionalism, and inexperience enabled them to be part of the students, helping them to overcome their fear of learning.[22]

In the U.S., we would call this peer teaching; its power comes from the fact that barriers between teacher and learner are broken down.

Preliminary work which has been done in the U.S. suggests that this model is highly relevant for this context as well, and is particularly promising for adult native language literacy instruction. Beyond the fact that traditionally credentialed teachers may not be available (Anglo teachers may not be able to teach the L1 because they don't know it while language minority teachers may opt for elementary or secondary positions because the pay is better), there are a number of reasons why community teachers are particularly suitable.

- In addition to sharing a linguistic background with learners, their shared cultural background can be a resource, enabling them to draw on culturally familiar discourse forms (eg., fables, proverbs, rules for interaction).

- Their common cultural, political and historical knowledge base can be integrated into learning.

- People from the communities of the learners are in a particularly good position to elicit and facilitate learning around learners' life experiences because they have shared them and can understand them. Their experience as immigrants or refugees, struggling with issues of transition to the new culture, can be a powerful tool for participatory curriculum development. Further, their own experience facing linguistic and cultural challenges enables them to act as role models for students and resources for colleagues trying to understand the issues facing language minority communities.

Several recent literacy programs and research projects provide evidence of the effectiveness of teachers from the learners' communities:

- D'Annunzio reports on a project in which Cambodians were trained to tutor ESL; he attributes much of its success to "the use of bilingual tutors who shared the students' experiences"and argues that, with a short training period, bilinguals (who, in the case of this program, were "only high school graduates") can become effective tutors and trainers of other tutors. He concludes that this model "may break the chain of reliance on heavy professional intervention."[23]

- Hornberger and Hardman's study of instructional practices in a Cambodian adult ESL class and a Puerto Rican GED class corroborates the importance of shared background between teachers and learners. In the case of the Cambodian class, they found that because the teacher herself was Cambodian, 1) the students had the option of using Khmer to respond to her questions and help each other; 2) the teacher and students shared assumptions about the learning paradigm; and 3) classroom activities were intimately connected with learners' other life activities and cultural practices. Likewise, in the GED class, instructional activities were embedded in a cultural and institutional context that integrated and validated learners' Puerto Rican identity. Their study suggests that the reinforcement of cultural identity, made possible by the shared cultural background of learners and teachers, is critical not just for L1 literacy acquisition, but for ESL acquisition as well.[24]

•Describing a project at the Quincy School Community Council in Boston's Chinatown, Hooper (1992) makes a powerful case for recruiting and training advanced ESL students as tutors for beginning learners. In his article, "Breaking the waiting list logjam: Training peer tutors for ESL," he reports that the project (called the Take and Give or TAG project) was designed in response to the fact that the program has over 1000 people on its waiting list who have to wait up to four years for a slot in the program. Students who have completed the highest level of ESL, but want to continue in the program and expand their ESL proficiency, are trained to provide home-based tutoring for students on the waiting list utilizing a beginning ESL video series. According to Hooper, the fact that the tutor and the learner share a common first language and a common immigrant experience enhanced the model. Hooper claims TAG is working not only as an innovative solution to the waiting list logjam, but as a strategy for eradicating barriers to "empowerment, to personal and community resource development, and to self-direction and self-fulfillment...and to communication in English".[25]

But what about the appropriateness of this model for ESL instruction? The notion that native speakers of English are the most qualified to teach ESL has become almost axiomatic in TESOL circles. This notion rests on the assumption that linguistic competence is the single most important criteria for successful teaching and goes hand in hand with the assumption that English should be taught entirely monolingually. Increasingly, however, both of these assumptions are being challenged by researchers, as well as practitioners.

- Phillipson claims that those qualities which are seen to make native speakers intrinsically better qualified as English teachers are, in fact, learned and can only be instilled through training. Moreover, he argues, non-native speakers possess certain qualifications which native speakers may not: they have gone through "the laborious process of acquiring English as a second language and ... have insight into the linguistic and cultural needs of their learners"[26]

- Thonis (1990) argues that anyone who teaches language minority students should possess the following qualities:

  - awareness of cultural differences
  - recognition of language diversity
  - understanding of the students' realities
  - sensitivity to the values of families
  - knowledge of the history and heritage of the group
  - recognition of the potential of all students
  - knowledge of second language acquisition theory
  - willingness to modify instruction as needed
  - solid understanding of curriculum imperatives for students learning a second language.[27]

Significantly, the first six of these qualities may be more readily attributable to people from the learners' cultures than to native speakers of English. The last three are, as Phillipson says, acquired through training or education regardless of one's language background.

These arguments are presented not to discredit the skills and strengths of monolingual ESL teachers, but rather to show that bilingual teachers have qualifications which, until recently, have been virtually ignored and excluded from consideration. Being a non-native speaker of English has often been seen more as a disadvantage than as an advantage in ESL circles.

so what?

Findings from this research and practices indicates that:

- Because of their linguistic, cultural, and experiential backgrounds, people from the communities of the learners may be particularly suited to implementing a culturally sensitive, learner-centered curriculum.

- With adequate training in curriculum development and literacy pedagogy, people from the learners' communities can be effective native language literacy and ESL instructors.

Why is this kind of project important? What is its significance for the field?

Although there is ample theoretical and research justification for a 'from the community-to the community' model for adult literacy instruction, the strongest justification for this model comes from project participants themselves. Perhaps the best way to end this chapter is by summarizing their views on why this model is significant. Here is what the Mentors said about why this model is important for them as well as for Interns, learners, the sites, and the field of adult education as a whole.

for Interns and Mentors...

•It gives opportunities to immigrants and refugees who cannot afford the traditional route to getting a degree; it gives us access to training and jobs that wouldn't otherwise be available.

•It gives us the chance to do meaningful, rather than menial, work.

•It gives us the opportunity to serve our own people while earning money at the same time.

•It gives us a sense of community with peers.

•It enables us to see people like ourselves as co-workers and to learn from our peers. It enables us to learn how to work with other people.

•It affirms our strengths and allows us to learn about ourselves.

•It demystifies the process of training and teaching others.

•It gives us a chance to learn about people from other cultures, to understand similarities and realize the extent of differences.

•It helps us build a work history and becomes a network for jobs.

•It gives us a chance to meet people and to extend acquaintances with others in the field.

for learners...

- It enables them to obtain services that would not otherwise be available, services which they thought they would not be able to get in this country.

- It gives them the chance to see people like themselves in teaching positions, as well as learning with them. It provides motivation for them.

- It enables them to change their lives for the better: they gain self-esteem and independence; they become more productive in society. It gives them a place to talk about and work on problems that they face.

- It enables them to accomplish specific goals like writing to their families, taking care of their own accounts, etc.

for the sites...

- It enables the sites to expand services.

- It enables the sites to provide greater support to students.

- It enables the sites to provide leadership opportunities for learners.

- It increases the diversity of the teaching staff.

- It allows for greater rapport with various student populations.

- The collaboration allows for cultural sharing between sites. It enables sites to share their experiences and problems, seeing their own work in a broader context.

for the field as a whole...

- It provides a concrete process for diversifying the workforce.

- It expands the resources available to meet the need for literacy services.

- It enriches the base of cultural understanding within the field.

Notes for Chapter One

1. Heath 1983; Reder 1987; Taylor and Dorsey-Gaines 1988; Scollon and Scollon 1981; Scribner and Cole 1981.
2. Tannen 1982; Street 1984; Gee 1990; Heath 1983.
3. Wells 1985; Street 1984; Lytle 1991; Carrell and Eisterhold 1983.
4. Freire and Macedo1987.
5. Lytle 1991:8.
6. Freire and Macedo 1987; Freire 1970.
7. Knowles 1984; Kazemek 1988; Nunan 1988; Lytle 1991.
8. Nunan 1988.
9. Candlin 1984:34.
10. Wallerstein 1983; Barndt 1987; Auerbach 1992.
11. Cummins 1981
12. Robson 1982; Rivera 1990; Klassen 1991; Gillespie and Ballering 1992.
13. Klassen 1991.
14. Strei 1992.
15. Vargas 1986; Wiley 1990-91.
16. Collingham 1988; Rivera 1988; Gillespie and Ballering 1992.
17. Strei 1992.
18. Hemmindinger 1987.
19. D'Annunzio 1991.
20. Garcia 1991.
21. Modiano 1968.
22. Cardenal 1990:45.
23. D'Annunzio 1991:52.
24. Hornberger and Hardman 1993.
25. Hooper 1992:4.
26. Phillipson 1992:195.
27. Thonis 1990:19.

Chapter Two: Project Structure and Participants

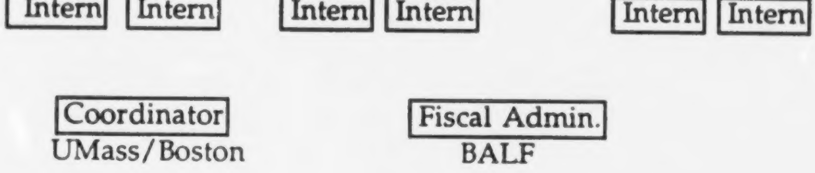
The 'from the community-to the community' model aims to provide opportunities for community-based organizations to work together, guided by a shared vision, while at the same time taking into account the differing conditions and needs of each individual site. This chapter examines how we attempted to achieve a balance between collaboration and independence in our project. It looks at how the project was set up (project design), how decisions were made (project administration), who the participants were, and how they were selected.

How was the project set up?

As a collaboration, the project was set up to enable participating agencies to work together in some ways and separately in others. Thus, although there was a common approach to training and literacy instruction (participatory and learner-centered), the language of instruction varied from site to site - instruction focused on Haitian Creole at HMSC, Spanish at HCC, and ESL at JMCS. The project design involved the following features:

- **three sites,** one focusing on Haitian Creole literacy (HMSC), one on Spanish literacy (HCC), and one on ESL (JMCS)
- **three Mentors** (one at each site) and a **Project Coordinator** (UMass/Boston faculty member), each of whom worked half-time for the project
- **two Interns at each site**
- **fiscal management** by the Boston Adult Literacy Fund (BALF)
- **site administration** (project design, fund-raising, hiring, liaison) by Site Adult Education Coordinators

The following diagram represents the project structure:


HMSC
Creole Literacy
Adult Ed. Coord.
Mentor
Intern
Intern
HCC
Spanish Literacy
Adult Ed. Coord.
Mentor
Intern
Intern
JMCS
ESL
Mentor
Intern
Intern
Coordinator
UMass/Boston
Fiscal Admin.
BALF

How was the project administered?

We tried to follow a participatory process in the way the project was administered. This meant that, rather than hierarchical project administration, there was ***collective decision-making*** *and a* ***division of labor*** *among participants. Some tasks were undertaken by the collaboration while others were undertaken by the individual sites. In general, the joint work involved fund-raising, planning, university-based training, evaluation, and documentation. The separate work included selecting Mentors and Interns, and recruiting of students. Administration and implementation of the instructional component was entirely in the hands of the sites. In the CTAFL, the sites also had to devote extensive time to finding funding for Intern stipends.*

collective decision-making

Planning and decisions about collaborative aspects of project administration took place at bi-weekly two hour meetings; the Mentors, Coordinator, and usually the BALF Director took part in these meetings. The Education Coordinators of the sites attended meetings related to fund-raising and project design. **Meetings** focused on planning and evaluating workshops, reports from the sites, classroom and Mentoring concerns, designing project evaluation and documentation as well as dissemination.

individual roles

The **Mentors** wore two hats as staff of both the project and their respective sites. Each Mentor was responsible for:

- administering the instructional components
- recruiting Interns
- teaching at least one literacy/ESL class
- coordinating and supervising the work of the site's Interns
- facilitating teacher-sharing meetings
- carrying out site-based evaluation and documentation activities
- acting as liaison between the project and the site (at meetings, etc.)

The **Project Coordinator** was responsible for facilitating the collaboration as well as coordinating the university-based component, for the documentation of project work, and for its dissemination. This meant:

- taking minutes of staff meetings
- preparing materials for and facilitating the workshops
- coordinating documentation and evaluation
- writing reports for the funders
- helping with fund-raising.

The **BALF Executive Director** was responsible for fiscal management of the project, assistance in fund-raising, and liaison with the funders regarding matters of funding.

What was the training design?

*The training included both **university-based** and **site-based** components. Chapter Three will focus on the approach to training and its content, describing what actually happened in workshops, Mentoring, and teacher-sharing. The following summarizes the overall design of training.*

university-based training

The university-based training consisted of **workshops** which all project participants attended. Workshops took place twice a month on Friday afternoons for two hours. These workshops were contexts for exploring topics related to participatory literacy instruction, as well as sharing experiences and concerns among sites. The proposal specified the following possible topics for these workshops:

- Theoretical approaches to adult literacy
- Overview of participatory curriculum development
- Assessing learners' needs, concerns, and goals
- Processes, tools, and activities for teaching literacy
- Family literacy
- The transition from native language literacy to ESL
- Assessing student progress

site-based training

The site-based training consisted of **in-class mentoring** as well as **teacher-sharing meetings.**

•**Mentoring**: Each Intern worked with the Mentor at his/her site. The original proposal specified a forty-five week training program to be divided into three fifteen week cycles corresponding to the instructional cycles of the sites. The first cycle was to focus on observation, the second on co-teaching, and the third on independent teaching. Interns would begin by observing the Mentor, working with individual students or small groups and assisting the teacher. They would gradually assume more responsibility, teaching under the Mentor's guidance until they were ready to teach on their own.

•**The teacher-sharing meetings** were designed to provide time to share ideas, resources, materials and concerns. They took place twice a month.

•**Schedules:** Interns were to work a total of 8 to 10 hours per week. Two hours a week were designated for meetings and the rest for in-class work. The weekly meetings switched between university-based workshops (twice a month) and teacher-sharing meetings at the sites on alternating weeks. Schedules for in-class teaching/Mentoring time varied in accordance with the sites' instructional schedules. In some cases, Mentors and Interns taught twice a week for three hours; in others, classes met four times a week for two hours. At some sites, classes were held during the day and at others, in the evening.

Who were the Mentors?

Probably the most critical aspect of implementation of this project is the selection of the Mentors. Their role is key in the day-to-day implementation of the project. They provide role models for students and Interns, oversee teaching at the sites, guide the work of the Interns, facilitate interactions between Interns and address any tensions that arise. They are the link between the university-based and site-based training, guiding the process of translating what has been done in the workshops into practice. This section looks at the process for selecting Mentors, their backgrounds, and their reasons for participating in the project.

the selection process

In order to ensure that the project would be as fully integrated into the work of each site as possible, the selection of Mentors was left to the sites. The Master Teachers for the BCLTP (Bilingual Community Literacy Training Project) were chosen because they were outstanding individuals already working at the sites who seemed 'natural' for the position. They had been at the site for several years, and thus were already deeply familiar with the student population and were an integral part of the agency's staff. Each had experience teaching beginning level ESL literacy students and strong ties to the communities of the learners. The BCLTP Master Teachers at the HMSC and JMCS went on to become Mentors in the CTAFL; however, because the BCLTP Master Teacher at the HCC left to pursue graduate studies, the HCC had to conduct a formal search for the CTAFL Mentor.

criteria for selection

Since the process for selecting Mentors in our work was somewhat informal, we came up with a list of criteria for the selection of Mentors retroactively, based on our experience of what is important for effective Mentoring. The following criteria should be seen, however, not as a blueprint, but as a general framework for Mentor selection. It is quite possible - even likely - that someone who is highly qualified to be a Mentor may not fulfill all of these criteria.

- background as immigrant or refugee; bilingual
- intimate knowledge of the community of the learners
- various kinds of involvement in the community (for example, through church activities, sports clubs, radio shows, volunteer work, as well as educational activities)
- strong commitment to and love of his/her community; a desire to serve the community
- experience with and commitment to participatory, community-based education
- experience teaching beginning ESL/literacy
- love of teaching and a non-hierarchical stance toward learners
- familiarity with and relationship to the site.

Issues in selecting Mentors...

As the following discussion suggests, the process of Mentor selection is more complex than a formal list implies.

As we constructed the above list, we debated whether to include 'political stance' as a criterion for Mentors since the notion of literacy as a tool for social change is so central to a participatory approach. We decided not to make this a criterion in itself because, in fact, the notion of politics can be interpreted and applied in so many ways. At one point in a prior project, for example, someone with an explicit social change agenda totally alienated students by attempting to impose his politics in the classroom. Thus, we decided that we needed to break the concept of being political down into component parts:

- The person should be someone who has the trust of the community and can provide guidance to others.

- The person should be able to lead the community to an understanding of the social and political nature of community issues (regardless of whether he/she seems revolutionary or soft-spoken and mild-mannered).

- The person must be able to draw out students' experiences so that they can reflect on them (asking questions like, "Did you choose not to learn to read and write? Why do you have to come to class now, at your age?" in order to invite reflection on the political causes of illiteracy).

- The person should be comfortable enough - have enough self-confidence - to guide and share knowledge with people like him/herself without being threatened.

- The person must be willing to explore Interns' perspectives without feeling the need to transmit a particular point of view.

Another issue in the selection process revolves around **sites vs. project hiring criteria.** A particular site, for example, may put high priority on hiring from within. It may want to give preference to people who have been Interns at that site. However, there may be an external candidate who has stronger leadership qualifications or otherwise fits the profile for a Mentor more appropriately. There are no simple solutions to this dilemma; each site has to balance the factors in terms of the particular applicants and the implications of the choice for both the site and the project.

possible interview questions

In our project, the HCC used the following interview questions to determine the teaching and Mentoring qualifications of applicants for the Mentor's position:

- Why are you interested in doing this job?
- Describe one of your best classes.
- What approach do you use in your teaching?
- Can you describe an activity you might do with the class?
- How do you become aware of and mediate sensitive issues in class?
- How would you provide guidance for Interns? How do you see yourself as a supervisor?
- What would you do if you felt an Intern was not doing a good job?
- What are your goals for this class?
- What are your goals in your own life?

so what?

As the list of criteria for Mentor selection indicates, we saw formal teaching or higher education credentials as less important than Mentors' ability to serve as role models to the Interns (because they themselves had overcome obstacles to become effective teachers). Of course, it's not enough to be from the community of the learners or to have a work history at the site. Mentors must also have very specific qualifications in terms of teaching and working with others in a leadership capacity. However, as a field, we have to let go of the notion that the only qualifications that count are formal ones, framed in terms of higher education or credentialing.

The following accounts of the histories of the Mentors in our project provide a sense of what we mean by 'non-traditional' backgrounds. While the particular paths leading each of them to the project were different, they shared many underlying motivations. They each had a strong sense of love for and commitment to their communities and saw the project as a way of giving back what they had gained through their own education. For each, the project was a way of doing something that they felt was deeply meaningful and getting paid for it at the same time; even more, they saw it as a way to extend their own education while contributing to that of others. In addition, all of them situated their work in the context of a larger process of social change. The power of their life experiences was not just that they could empathize with students' situations because they had been there, but that they were living examples of moving beyond this kind of exploitation.

This is my dream...

Julio Midy, the Mentor at the HMSC, has been living in the U.S., 'unfortunately', as he says, for eleven years. It is unfortunate, he says, because:

> When you come from a country where 88% of the people do not know how to read and write, and if you had the privilege in your childhood to go to school, then that's the place you should be in order to help those who don't know how to read and write. And believe me, if I had the choice, my place would be in Haiti, doing just that.

Julio had studied anthropology at a university in Haiti, but left because "when you get through all your studies, you still cannot see the light at the end of the tunnel." Like many of his students, Julio started out his worklife in the U.S. in a minimum wage factory job, boxing pillows for $3.00 an hour (the same pillows he then saw for sale at $21.00 apiece at fancy department stores). In 1985, he enrolled as an undergraduate at UMass/Boston; his first UMass teacher was also the Adult Education Coordinator at the HMSC; she invited him to work at the Center and he has been an ESL teacher there since 1985. He also worked for many years in the Haitian Bilingual Program of the Boston Public Schools. Julio's ties in the Haitian community go beyond his work at the Center - he has his own Creole radio show in Boston and is a leading Haitian soccer organizer and player in the Northeast.

Julio sees his work as a Creole teacher as a concrete way to contribute to his community. For him, teaching is a way both to prove his commitment and to work for his people. It's a way for him to make money and be useful at the same time.

> *I have to tell you that I love Haiti, but saying that doesn't mean anything if you don't do anything concrete to prove your love. I love education for two reasons. First, even though I don't make much money - I don't make the money I'd like to make - I get paid for doing what I love. And also, teaching gives me a chance to help my own people. It gives me the opportunity to kill two birds with one stone - that's the reason why I really do love it. I'm working with my people and I'm doing it as my job. So I'm doing what I did not have a chance to do in my country, which is educate my own people. I have the privilege to do it in the United States. That's why I love teaching.*

Julio sees his teaching as laying the groundwork for some day going back to Haiti and making a contribution there.

> *My goal is to learn more and more every day. I think you can learn from each student. Every day you'll have to learn something new. And you learn from people from different countries, you learn from different teachers. My goal is to learn as much as possible. One day we'll have to build a new Haiti. And I will be there using what I'm learning in the United States now.*

Julio sees his teaching as part of the process of challenging exploitation and working for a better world.

> *The reason why [I chose to do education work] is that we have this unequal world, this world where people are exploiting other people. Just because some people don't really have the knowledge, some people don't really have any education, it's easy to exploit them. So, I think, as a teacher... I reduce the rate of illiteracy; therefore the lawyer will have less to do. If you want to talk about change, you have to educate your people...*

Finally, Julio sees literacy education as intimately tied to the struggle for social justice.

> *The last thing I would like to say is that I hope one day we'll not have to talk about literacy in the world. Because, like I always say, illiteracy is the result of exploitation. So I think everybody has a right to know how to read and write. If you know how to read and how to write, if everybody knows how to read and write, definitely we would have a better world. This is my dream.*

People are misunderstood and abused...

Ana Zambrano, the Mentor at the Jackson-Mann Community School, came to the U.S. from Colombia in 1984.

Ana has dealt with issues relating to literacy throughout her life, and for her, this project was a natural extension of prior work as a learner and a teacher. She started learning English at a church program in East Boston and just a year later got a teaching position at the JMCS. Her background as an adult educator in Colombia had laid the groundwork for this quick transition to teaching.

Ana spent her childhood on a farm, in a family where her grandmother didn't know how to read and write, but her father read a lot; theirs was the only family in a fifty or sixty mile radius that owned books. She learned how to read at age 7 and her reading took her out of "reality as a child of a farm family with so much poverty and misfortune around." As a teenager, she worked in a literacy campaign which trained community people to teach basic skills. Ana then moved to Bogota and worked in a mothers' cooperative for three years. Her experiences in these two settings influenced her approach to teaching:

> *When I taught farmers, we used farmers' tools which were right around us. The [literacy] part only came in when you knew the tool... People could relate it immediately with what they were doing. It was very real, very relevant. In Bogota, the curriculum we developed was around children, and taking care of the children. The women were all working mothers who had children and basically nothing to live on. So the curriculum was that. So it was their reality.*

But when Ana first started learning English in the U.S., she was confronted with a completely different approach to education:

> *I learned English in a place where the teachers were all North American college students. So there was a kind of confusion for me*

> *when I came in because the people who had taught me English were people who had nothing to do with me or with my reality as an immigrant working at a warehouse. I had taught literacy and so all the values I had gotten from that, all the pride I had gotten, was somehow shaken or vanished to some extent by being taught by this group of young North Americans from the most expensive universities here, with completely different socio-economic backgrounds than mine.*

At the same time, however, Ana had brought a sense of community activism with her to the U.S. From her earliest days as an ESL student, she had taken on the role of assisting people to get what they needed. From this, the transition to becoming a teacher was a natural one. When asked, "What made you continue in education?", she said:

> *It's as simple as this: by the time I was learning English, I was already going places with people to request services and helping them with translations. I knew tons of people and kept meeting more people who were misunderstood, abused, because they don't speak the language. I thought if I had learned, everybody else could learn to defend and advocate for themselves.*

When Ana became a teacher, her first instinct was to follow the approach that her own ESL teachers had used:

> *So I was in the middle of trying to weigh if what I had done in the past had anything to do with learning. I valued so much what [my ESL teachers] did because I had learned a lot. They gave me this book to read and I read. In the beginning it was hard to make sense of both worlds. In the beginning I tried to dismiss what I had done in the past and I tried not to relate it to my teaching at that moment. I tried just to follow 'the rules'.*

At the same time that Ana was teaching, she was working as a counselor and advocate. This work, along with her participation in a critical thinking project, prompted her to re-examine her teaching:

> *But after a few years of confusion, I started to listen better and to look at people's realities in a more humane way... My own assumptions about people who came to this country were being completely challenged by people's realities in my advocacy and counseling job. I could see that reality right with my own eyes every single day. If I saw these realities, what was so different in the classroom? Why did I address those things*

> *in the classroom in such a different way? This started me in the process of thinking. I think I started to be much more myself again. I had to go through this cultural clash... In Colombia, I was called a community leader...After that I started really looking at what the community needs, what they want... And that has been a switch in my teaching for a few years. And it becomes clearer every cycle, and it changes according to the group, and it changes according to the make-up of the class. This doesn't necessarily mean that everybody is happy with this approach, but I feel it is more effective.*

Ana's motivation for becoming involved in Intern training stemmed from her desire to teach people to advocate for themselves, to defend themselves and to be less dependent on others. Like Julio, she saw this work as very much tied to the fight for social justice.

> *Somebody did the work of teaching me. Now I could teach somebody else not to depend on somebody. I know for me [knowing the language] made the difference so it should make a difference for other people. That kept me in teaching. And it is basically an instinct in me to fight against injustice.*

Being in a position to train others (most of whom had been her own ESL students) gave Ana a special sense of purpose in this project.

> *Now, by having the interns, I see the efforts multiply by five. And there is much more of an impact on people's lives with five people directly involved. It will help them in the future to teach or guide their lives. It makes me feel that my work is much more important.*

In addition, being a trainer gave her a new sense of pride in herself and enabled her to see her own teaching in a new light:

> *I have learned and see much better what I know... Before I didn't think that I knew that much. I know now that I really know a lot about this stuff... When I see the interns teaching, I'm observing myself. The new teachers have made me reflect a lot on what I do and how I do it. Who did she/he learn this from? Where did he/she learn this? There are times you feel so proud! Other times you see your own mistakes so clearly you want to hide! ... So I know I can be a good trainer. But it is a continuous reflecting exercise.*

In the daytime I was a robot; at night I was a human being...

Felipe Vaquerano came to the U.S. from El Salvador in 1988 at the age of 19. Much of his life in El Salvador had been shaped by the war there.

Felipe grew up in the countryside, helping his father on the farm, but the war forced him to move to the city at age 11. There he lived with his sister while he continued his education. Because of the political situation, he left El Salvador to join a brother in the U.S. three days after he finished high school.

Like Ana, Felipe got his start doing literacy work in his own country. In El Salvador, high school students were required to teach Spanish literacy to adults for 6 months in order to get their diploma.

> *It was good experience for us. I had always wanted to be a teacher but I had never thought about teaching adults. It was so nice to see people who were 25 years old and you were helping them. It was nice to help people who were always saying "I'm too old to learn."*

The approach to teaching that was used there prepared Felipe for his work in the U.S. in some ways, and, in others, was quite different.

> *In El Salvador, we tried to use the students' experiences to motivate them to go back to school. But we didn't have methods like using stories or codes. We didn't deal with issues. We started with the alphabet, then put the consonants and vowels together. With writing, we had to teach them how to hold a pencil. The teacher did hand over hand.*

Coming to the U.S. was difficult for Felipe at first. He had to work two jobs, one at Burger King and the other in a plastics factory, making $5.75 per hour. He spoke no English and this presented problems for him at work.

> *I remember one time they wanted me to clean the parking lot at work, but they didn't know how to tell me and I couldn't understand. So they pointed at me to get the phone. They had to call somebody who spoke Spanish on the phone to tell me what to do. When I got to the phone somebody said to be sure to clean the parking lot. I asked her who she was and she said a friend of the boss. I felt so frustrated. At that time I had to work two jobs; it was difficult and I said "I'm not going to have this kind of life. I'm going back to school."*

Felipe enrolled as a beginning ESL student in night classes at the JMCS in 1989. At the JMCS, Felipe immediately excelled as a student; he learned English quickly and volunteered to work on the student magazine. After only five semesters at the JMCS, he had moved to the advanced ESL class, and began to take courses at the Harvard University extension school. He also enrolled for Human Services training at a local agency serving Spanish-speaking people and volunteered as a translator at Children's Hospital.

In 1991, Felipe was selected as an Intern in the BCLTP because he had become a leader among students so quickly. At the same time, he continued to work at the factory during the day. Felipe had several reasons for wanting to become an Intern. When he first joined the project, he saw it as a chance to try something new, to get to know other cultures and to become a role model for his peers:

> *After working in a factory, it was like a whole different world for me. When I first began, I was curious about how people taught English here, and I just wanted to be a teacher. I always admired my teacher, you know, and I wanted to work in a classroom with people from different countries, to get to know their culture. At the same time, I wanted to try to show people that even though we didn't go to the university, we have skills that we can use to teach, to help others. And on the other hand, it was an opportunity for me to get into a better job.*

For Felipe, teaching represented doing work that was meaningful. He often said,*"In the daytime, I felt like a robot, but at night I was a human being."*

The importance of this work was reinforced for Felipe when, as his English became more proficient, he started having difficulty at the plastics factory. After a few months with the project, he was laid off because, he says:

> *I was learning English and I knew about my rights as a worker - and I knew they were not complying with them. I had been there without a raise for 2 years and I had asked for one. I had one week vacation and*

> ***when I came back, they said, "We have bad news for you. You are going to be laid off." Just like that. I didn't know what to think...***

This experience reinforced for Felipe the need to get into a different kind of work. Becoming part of this project was a chance to move ahead; he saw it as opening doors that otherwise would have been closed. In spite of the fact that he was such a good student,there was no way that he could afford to go on to the university for higher education. This project gave him the chance to gain experience and skills, to learn something concrete that he could use for future employment, and to move out of a dead-end job. As he said, through this project, he could develop a job network, a resume, and a base of experience. In his words, ***"Now when I have to look for another job, I can say I have done this. I have this certificate and experience which is more important than a certificate."***

As an Intern, Felipe distinguished himself: he took great initiative and quickly gained confidence in teaching. He worked well with other Interns, and volunteered to present his work at project-wide workshops. He grasped the concepts of participatory education and was able to put them into practice in his own ESL classrooms. He was the only Intern in the project who prepared and facilitated a workshop for the whole group; his workshop focused on using games to teach ESL and literacy.

In fact, Felipe's motivation and outstanding performance as an Intern did result in his using the project as a stepping stone to better jobs. After being laid off at the plastics factory, he was hired as a Teaching Assistant in a special needs school, largely, he believes, because of the training and experience he acquired in the BCLTP. He was one of several candidates for the position of Mentor at the HCC (including a certified bilingual teacher and some candidates who were already working at the site); he made such a good impression in the interview that he was as the Spanish Literacy Mentor.

Thus, the project was concretely important for Felipe. For him, being able to earn a higher salary was not something to be laughed at: a friend of his who has been in the U.S. for eighteen years, is not yet making the salary that Felipe makes as a Mentor. In addition, the work gives Felipe the chance to do something meaningful:

> ***I have my own desk, and I have my paper here, my notebook, my dictionary. I had never thought about working in a classroom in this country. It's good because it gives you the chance to express who you are, how you feel, and to show people that even though you are not American or you haven't been here for a long time, you can do something for yourself and for other people.***

Who were the Interns?

Over the course of the four years of both the BCLTP and the CTAFL projects, a total of over thirty-six Interns participated in the training. The next section on Interns incorporates our cumulative experience with both projects, since this experience yields the greatest knowledge base from which to generalize.

general intern profiles

The original proposal stipulated four kinds of people who might be recruited as Interns:

1) Former teachers or literacy workers from communities surrounding the participating sites who have strong first language educational backgrounds but may have weak ESL proficiency or lack U.S. professional credentials and are therefore unable to secure jobs in their fields of expertise. In training them to teach first language literacy, the project would provide an opportunity to utilize their previous background in the process of developing ESL proficiency and upgading skills relevant for employment in the U.S.

2) Advanced ESL students currently enrolled in collaborating sites who have excelled in their own language learning, are interested in helping lower level learners, and want to further their own education while contributing to their own community. The project would enable them to gain professional skills and lead to higher education for some participants.

3) Bilingual undergraduate students from UMass or other local universities who are eager for opportunities to 'give back' what they have gained in the form of community service. For these students, the training program would offer the chance to develop skills which draw on their cultural, linguistic and educational strengths, and, in some cases might lead to education majors or careers in Bilingual Education or ESL. This category included undergraduates who had received literacy training, tutoring and teaching experience through the Student Literacy Corps project at UMass.

4) Community and parent leaders who have expressed a strong commitment to the educational development of their communities. These might be individuals who have emerged as parent, housing or health advocates in their own communities and express a desire to serve in these communities. The project would enable them to access professional development to supplement or enhance their current roles.

How were Interns selected?

As with the Mentors, the actual selection of the Interns was done by the sites through their own networks of contacts. This process varied from site to site. In some cases, Interns were selected from people already in contact with the sites; in others, they were recruited. At the HMSC, for example, there is an ongoing stream of people from the community who come to volunteer or work at the site. Some of those who became Interns, either in the BCLTP or in the CTAFL, were: UMass/Boston Student Literacy Corps participants, former literacy workers in Haiti's literacy campaign, school administrators, active church members, students in the ESL program, and non-teaching site staff (the receptionist and the intake worker). At the JMCS, all but one of the Interns were former ESL students in the program who showed exceptional promise and had been leaders in student activities at the site. In East Boston, Interns were recruited through personal and community networks in the local Central American community.

criteria for selection of Interns

The following factors were considered in selecting Interns:

- strong motivation to teach (desire to become an Intern for substantive rather than financial reasons)
- commitment to community (prior service/volunteering)
- demonstrated leadership potential (through prior work at site or in community)
- L1 literacy proficiency and high school education
- learner-centered, non-authoritarian views on teaching
- willingness to learn from peers and students
- prior experience in literacy education (participation in literacy campaigns, training as teachers, or work in public education)
- appropriate time availability (no scheduling conflicts)

Again, we did not expect that each Intern would meet all of these qualifications; they served as guidelines in the selection process. The process for assessing Intern qualifications varied from site to site. Usually, once a potential Intern was identified, the Mentor informally explained the requirements, schedule and objectives of the project, as well as getting a general sense of the Intern's potential. Then an interview took place which, in some cases, involved formal interview questions and in others, an informal discussion. The JMCS developed a set of scenarios and invited potential Interns to explain how they would respond to them. For example, Interns were asked how they would respond to someone who said, "I don't want you as a teacher because you're not an American." In one case, a potential Intern said she would invite the student to stay in the class for little while and see how it went before deciding; in another, the candidate said he would tell the student, "You have no place here." Selection was based on responses to questions such as these.

One of the things that we learned through the interview process was that recruitment is a two-way process: what we say to Interns is just as important as what they say to us in the initial interview. The more open and informative we are about the expectations and approach, the more we will get a sense of the Intern's interest and potential. Being open at the beginning prevents difficulties later and sets the tone for a relationship of mutual learning. In the BCLTP, we relied on interviews and initial meetings to introduce Interns to the project. However, in the CTAFL project, we decided to be more formal about what participating in the project meant, both in terms of logistical expectations and in terms of the approach to training. We sent each Intern a letter outlining exactly what the project was before the first workshop. This letter is in the Appendixes.

Issues in selecting Interns...

As with the selection of Mentors, the process of selecting Interns is more complex than a simple list of criteria suggests; we found that our initial assessments of an Intern's potential from interviews were not always accurate. We have had many discussions retroactively about which criteria were in fact most important in determining the success of candidates.

One issue we have discussed is whether it is an advantage or a disadvantage for an Intern to have had **prior teaching experience.** Some Interns who had been teachers before focused on books and had the attitude, "I'm the teacher - I'm the authority." These Interns had to unlearn traditional ways of relating to students and teaching literacy. In other cases, however, having a teaching background allowed Interns to jump into teaching with ease and confidence, contributing their experience to the group's knowledge.

Another issue which applied to Interns as well as Mentors was the question of the Intern's **political stance or world view:** since the project was participatory in its orientation, and instruction was aimed toward connecting literacy with the social context of students' lives, did this mean that Interns needed to share, at least to some extent, a social change perspective when they came into the project? We found it wasn't always an advantage to have a social change perspective and it wasn't necessarily a disadvantage not to have one. As with Mentors, what seemed most important was the Intern's general stance in regard to learners - that they have a respectful attitude rather than a paternalistic one. It was important, as Ana said, that Interns present themselves as fighters - people willing to take on struggle and advocate on behalf of themselves and students. Within this framework, we were able to problematize the issue of social change as part of the content of workshops, making it a subject of inquiry and dialogue rather than a prerequisite for participation. In fact, differences in opinion helped push forward everyone's thinking

A related issue concerned the role of the Intern's **religious beliefs**. In a number of cases, either people wanted to become Interns to fulfill a sense of mission or their religion was so central to their thinking that it permeated their view of how to teach literacy. We were concerned that these beliefs might shape their teaching processes (attitudes toward students) or even its content (imposition of religious ideas). Actually, however, these fears were realized to a very limited extent in only one case (where the Intern seemed to view her students more as poor victims needing to be 'saved'). In most cases, Interns treated their beliefs as personal matters which they chose to share or not share like any other ideas. In no cases did they impose their beliefs; rather, these beliefs seemed to strengthen their commitment to working with students.

Likewise, the role of **motivation for being an intern** was less than clear cut. In general, our view was that Interns needed to be motivated by a real commitment to their communities and a desire to contribute. Nevertheless, because Interns were paid a stipend for participation, a potential motivation was the additional income. Although we tried to screen out anyone who was participating primarily for the sake of the money, it became clear that a few of the Interns saw the project as an interesting way to make some extra money. However, at least in one case, an Intern who began with this attitude became so involved and committed through the course of the project that she volunteered to continue teaching after the funding ran out.

Even **knowledge of the target language** turned out not to be a bottom-line requirement for the Creole component. Since French has traditionally been the medium of instruction in Haiti, many highly literate Haitian adults have not had the opportunity to study Creole. Thus, two of the Interns who were qualified in other ways had to learn to read and write in Creole themselves (through Creole workshops and intensive independent study) to prepare for teaching.

so what?

Thus, our experience has been that many factors interact to determine an Intern's effectiveness, including attitude, prior experience, openness to learning, and flexibility. People who have weaknesses in one area often have strengths in another, and are able overcome weaknesses through the work of the project itself. A few generalizations can be made about recruiting Interns:

- Risks can be minimized by recruiting candidates who are known to the site - who have a strong track record as a student, staff member, or volunteer.

- Interns' attitudes are key in determining effectiveness: they must show respect for students and openness toward a participatory approach, and be motivated out of a desire to strengthen their community and fight the injustices it faces.

- Complete agreement about perspectives is not necessary, but willingness to exchange ideas and learn from peers is.

- Full participation in training activities should be mandatory. Scheduling expectations should be clearly stated at the outset.

What were the Interns' backgrounds?

age and education

The hallmark of the group of Interns trained in both projects was its diversity. Participants came from Haiti, Brazil, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Peru, and Colombia. They ranged in age from their early twenties to retirement age. Their educational backgrounds varied: some had university degrees from their home countries, others had not completed high school there; one had been a pre-med student. Many had come as recently as 1989 and had enrolled in beginning ESL classes at the participating sites upon arrival. Some were in the process of receiving their GED's while they were Interns; others were enrolled in community colleges or universities.

occupation in homeland and in U.S.

In terms of occupations, many had been professionals in their homelands (engineers, computer programmers and educators). In addition to those who had been teachers in their home countries, some had worked in literacy campaigns; others had been involved in related aspects of literacy work (eg., as radio broadcaster for a literacy campaign, director of an adult education school). Once they arrived in the U.S., almost all of them had to work in unskilled entry-level jobs (in factories, hotels, restaurants or as housecleaners). Others had office jobs - as computer operators or receptionists - which they found mechanical or unchallenging.

Intern Profiles

Countries of origin	*Backgrounds in home country*	*Occupations in the U.S.*	*Connection to site*
Haiti Honduras El Salvador Brazil Guatemala Colombia Peru	students: high school medical school college computer engin. dentistry teachers: day care elementary secondary adult education literacy campaign worker radio show host computer programmer director of school	security guard car mechanic factory worker student GED ESL college, comm. college housecleaner hotel room service worker dishwasher bookkeeper pizza deliverer adult ed center: receptionist in-take worker childcare worker women's shelter worker computer programmer office worker	community volunteer UMass tutor receptionist at site GED student at site former ESL student at site family contact of Mentor church choir leader church activist daughter of ESL student in-take worker at the site

Why did the Interns want to participate in the project?

In both projects, Interns were interviewed about their backgrounds and reasons for wanting to teach. The following discussion includes excerpts from these interviews.

"It happened to me..."

Like Roberto, many of the Interns used the term "we" in the interviews, referring to themselves not as individuals, but as members of a community which includes both people who are literate and people who aren't. They talked about joining the project as a way to help others who were going through the struggles they had gone through. Because they had faced the same problems when they first came to the U.S., the Interns felt they could help others get through difficulties with the language:

> ***When I didn't speak English, I knew how it feels not to understand when people open their mouths so big, saying "Do you understand?" It happened to me. Then I said to myself, "You will have to speak English and to help the other people who are in the same condition." The language barrier is so restricting that people think you are out of your mind if you don't speak the language - not everyone, but some people. That's the reason I wanted to do this work with Latinos.***

"There was a lot of discrimination..."

For some Interns, it wasn't just the general struggles with the language, but specific experiences dealing with discrimination that motivated them to want to teach. One Intern, for example, describes what happened when she was placed in a regular English course at a community college:

> ***I had some problems there because the teacher didn't want to give extra attention to the four foreigners and told them that they wouldn't pass the class. We complained to the Dean but they didn't do anything about it... I did face a lot of discrimination down there. And it really hurts me. I think that was one of the main reasons for deciding to help my people. I don't think that it is fair that if you come from another country, you have to put up with people - the way they treat you like you are a stranger, you don't know how to write. They put you down. They don't realize that you have an education too, that you are a person...they have to see the people the way they are. It's hard, they don't see you. They only think that because you are Spanish, you are automatically no good.***

She went on to say that part of her reason for wanting to teach was to help others defend themselves against the kind of discrimination she experienced:

> *They don't know their rights and they suffer. I already went through that and I don't want them to go through what I went through. Because when I came to this country, there was a lot of discrimination.*

"In my country you didn't need it..."

Another reason the Interns wanted to teach L1 literacy related to their understanding of the special challenges (beyond the language barrier and discrimination) people face in the U.S. when they are not literate. It is the differences in the social context that make illiteracy even more of a problem here. One Intern, for example, talked about the problems of never having learned to read and write being exacerbated in the U.S:

> *In my country not everybody is literate. Most are illiterate... When I came here, [literacy] was more necessary than in my country - you had to sign a check; in my country you didn't need it - poor people don't have to sign checks...*

"It sunk in my mind..."

Several of the Interns had had experiences in their own countries which had inspired them to want to learn more about teaching literacy. For them, the project was a way to follow through on something they had started earlier in their lives and, perhaps, to learn something they could eventually bring back to their countries. One, for example, had taught literacy to about 50 students every night for two years when she was a teenager.

> *I did that because I always like to be active in the community. I like to help people because you know they need it. It is also a good way to get to know people and to help them with their lives over here."*

Many Interns had worked in literacy campaigns in their countries and had been inspired by that experience to continue teaching:

> *When I was there, I did five months in literacy work with adults. And when I loved it, I saw at the same time that the people loved me too. I love to teach adults because I think I have something to give them.*

Another Intern told the story of an experience which influenced his later desire to teach:

> *When I was much younger and in Haiti and failed the state exam, there was a beach where I used to go very often. Since I wasn't doing anything, there was plenty of time to do what I wanted to do. The beach was five kilometers from where I lived and I liked to walk up the hill to the beach and keep healthy. I met a fisherman there, about my age, named Joba. Joba had a girlfriend who knew how to read and write and he couldn't. I told him not to worry about it; it wasn't a big deal. I told him, "Listen, I have plenty of time, we are going to work on this. I'll teach you at least to sign your name." I kept going to the beach to meet Joba.... and before I left the country Joba could sign his name. If I could make this impact, this progress, a new life for someone - that had a very strong impact on me. That's one of my biggest achievements... Because of me, Joba could write his name. That was very significant for me.*

One Intern was influenced by teaching a family maid how to read as a child:

> *When I was a little girl in Haiti, we had maids... So there was one of the maids who didn't know how to read and write. I taught her how to read and write at that time. She was so grateful and when I came here it had sunk in my mind.*

"I can't fix the world, but at least I can do a little bit..."

The project gave many of the Interns the feeling that they could make a difference. It satisfied their need to do something socially useful while at the same time doing something for themselves: by meeting the learners' needs, they would, in various ways, be meeting their own needs. The project provided a framework for learning how to utilize their own background in a constructive way. One Intern expressed this as follows:

> *I thought that I can't fix the world, but at least I can do a little bit. With a little help, I can make other people happy, maybe.*

Another saw the project as a way of using his own education for the community while at the same time doing something personally and intellectually challenging:

> *I feel like someone who has an ability should do something; this is my commitment. As far as I'm concerned, I don't really see education like something for the future to make money. I like it and it's a kind of intellectual work that I find myself into.*

"This is a refreshment..."

Several Interns saw the project as something that humanized them, giving meaning to their lives. Although they used their hands during the day, they were able to use their heads and their hearts at night:

> ***I love it... After working as a housekeeper all day, working with cleaners and mops and things like that, it's like a refreshment to go to the school and teach and be with the students and offer something from myself, something that is not my strength, my legs... For me, this is a refreshment.***

"It is a concrete way of helping people"

For Interns who came to the project with a more explicit social change perspective, the project offered the opportunity to go beyond the rhetoric of politics. A Haitian Intern, for example, sees teaching as a way to "put his money where his mouth is" - to take a kind of action which may make a real difference:

> ***The Haitian community has a lot of problems in terms of education and needs a lot of help. As a Haitian myself, I feel like I should help instead of talking about the problem. What do I do as a Haitian for the community? I was interested in politics in Haiti - to be on a radio station to talk very abstractly or tell where I stand. There is a huge amount of people in Haiti who cannot write, who cannot read. Now, if I go back to Haiti, I would like to work with those people. This is the kind of politics in which I would like to be involved. It is a concrete way of helping people.***

"When you open a school, you close a prison."

An Intern who had been a teacher in Haiti saw his teaching more globally in terms of making the world a better place, a goal he has had since his childhood:

> ***When I was young, my father said to me all the time, "You can help better the world when you teach someone." All the time I think about that. After my studies, I thought about helping. I also like the thought that someone said, "When you open a school you close a prison."***

"I have something inside to offer..."

If there is one theme that can be said to represent all the Interns' reasons for participating in the project, it is the theme of commitment to their communities. In every case, it was a deeply-felt desire to contribute to the well-being of people who were in situations similar to their own that moved people to join the project and pushed forward their work. One Intern summed up this feeling when she said, "I'm not a professional teacher, but I know that I have something inside to offer."

Who were the students?

Since this project focused primarily on training Interns to teach literacy and ESL, rather than on the teaching itself, we focused less on documentation of the literacy students' backgrounds than on that of the Interns. However, the following brief profile will provide a sense of who the students were; the chapter on teaching will describe how their backgrounds and experiences shaped instruction.

How were students recruited?

JMCS

Recruitment varied from site to site, depending on the language of instruction and relation of the site to the community of the learners. Since Interns worked in ongoing ESL classes at the JMCS, recruitment was not an issue: students were assigned to classes off of the already-long waiting list and Interns were placed in these classes; when Interns were ready to teach independently, additional classes were formed from people on the waiting lists. There was no special recruitment for the classes supported through the project.

HMSC

Similarly, at the Haitian Multi-Service Center, when this project started, there was a long waiting list for ESL classes which included many people (an estimated 20-30%) who were not literate in their first language. The HMSC offers a variety of services (including health, legal, job training, etc.) and has a largely Haitian staff; for these reasons, the site attracted many Haitians with little schooling who might not have gone to a mixed language ESL site (because of being intimidated either by the 'school' context or by the fact that the sites are not bilingual). Further, since the HMSC is the only agency in Boston which exclusively serves Haitians, it is a central contact point for newly arrived Haitians in the Boston area. While their original reason for going to the HMSC may not be educational, these students often sign up for classes once they see it is a 'safe' bilingual setting. Thus, there was a significant population of students already in contact with the Center who were prime candidates for the classes.

While many of these students were eager for Creole classes, others were initially more interested in *ESL* classes. To some extent, this was the same issue that faces any native language literacy program: students question the usefulness of learning to read and write in their first language when they are in the U.S. However, the situation at the HMSC was compounded by the fact that, unlike Spanish, Haitian Creole was, until recently, not the language of initial literacy acquisition for anyone; further, because, historically, French was imposed as the official language and the language of education (in order to ensure the domination of the elite and exclude the masses from political and economic power), Creole has traditionally been stigmatized and seen as an impediment to improving one's life. For these reasons, the issue at the HMSC at the beginning of the BCLTP was not so much one of finding students, as one of convincing them that they could benefit from Creole literacy classes. The entire center went through a process of dialogue and discussion, which resulted in a substantial change in attitudes toward Creole literacy among students. By the time the CTAFL project began, the question of "why native language literacy?" was no longer such an issue for students.

HCC

The native language literacy classes at the Harborside school took place in a context quite different from those at the other sites: it was the only site where an entirely new component was set up through the project. Unlike the HMSC and the JMCS, there was no pre-existing pool of potential students (with low Spanish literacy and minimal schooling) on the waiting list. Although many students who were not literate in Spanish had been identified through the amnesty ESL classes (students who came to the Center for the first time because they needed the required number of hours of ESL instruction to become documented), at that time there had been no financial or structural support for Spanish literacy. The Master Teacher of the BCLTP undertook a concerted outreach effort which included calling and writing personal notes to former amnesty students, making announcements at churches, having house parties at former and current students' homes and inviting potential students, making announcements in ESL classes at Harborside, posting flyers, making announcements in local newspapers and newsletters, and contacting other ESL, adult education and Hispanic community agencies.

However, despite all these efforts, once classes began, it was the students themselves who were the primary resources for recruitment of new students: they brought friends and relatives, conducted an informational open house in which they displayed their work, and even produced a video about the classes which was aired on neighborhood cable TV. In addition, when Felipe became the Mentor, he used his own personal network of contacts in the Central American community to recruit students: one of the students he recruited was his roommate, whom he had been trying to convince to go back to school for some time. In addition, his aunt, who sells pupusas (a Central American food), had many customers who don't know how to read and write; she helped by trying to convince them to go to literacy classes.

What were the students' backgrounds?

JMCS

There was a great deal of variation in the student populations both within and between sites. At the JMCS, for example, students in the beginning ESL classes came from 26 different nationality groups, a variety of educational histories (from finishing only a few years of school to graduating from college), and both urban and rural backgrounds. They ranged in age from late teens to pensioners. There was a relatively even split between men and women. They were both refugees and immigrants, here for political, personal and/or economic reasons. Regardless of their educational backgrounds, many were employed in low-wage manufacturing or service sector jobs (in factories, restaurants, hotels, hospitals or housecleaning).

HMSC

At the HMSC, most of the literacy students had either never gone to school or had gone only for a few years. Many were older people (mainly women) who had come to the U.S. years ago, and lived in a virtually all-Haitian community in Boston (perhaps staying home to care for family). Often they had worked in the markets or other kinds of self-employment in Haiti and were unemployed in the U.S. Others had come more recently and, of these, some were quite young (in their late teens or twenties). After the coup against Aristide, the HMSC became a resettlement site for refugees, and this brought a new group of Creole literacy students. These students were primarily men, from a range of educational backgrounds, separated from their families and living in groups.

HCC students

The student population at Harborside went through various phases. The first group of students in the BCLTP was quite homogeneous: they were peasants and fishermen from El Salvador. As the project developed, new students from other Central American countries (Guatemala and Costa Rica) enrolled; while they, too, were primarily from rural environments, some of them came from urban backgrounds; a few students from Puerto Rico started classes near the end of the project. Students ranged in age from their twenties to forties. At the beginning, most of the students in the classes were men, but by the end of the project, classes were evenly divided between men and women. Many of them had experienced war and political repression as well as economic struggles in their homelands. They often worked in the most marginalized jobs (washing dishes, cleaning offices, working in the lowest paid factory jobs) - when they could find work.

Getting a sense of students' histories and reasons for learning English was also very much a part of the learning process itself. Interns often explored students backgrounds as a preliminary step in curriculum development (see Chapter 4). The following sample charts (which were done as the basis for a class activity) give a sense of who the students were in one ESL class and one Spanish literacy class.

Name	Country	JOB in Your Country	Do in U.S.A.	Don't like in U.S.	Family in U.S.!	Hopes
Leya fuksman	Russia	Engineer	Retired Student	Cold winds	grandson Husband Brother and his wife	go to museum!
thant thuy	vietnan	Student	Student	Cold wheater	Parents, sister @ Brothers	good job @ English very
Ramiro Abello	Colombia	Supervisor	Bus boy cleaning person	cold weather	Nobody	a car Beautiful & wife.
Gildete Rocha	Brazil	Student	Housecleaner	cold weather	one brother	a car
Aleksandr Gombert	Russia	worker	Retired Student	The more snow.	wife	my son com To U.S.
Cuong	vietnan	fotographer	worker	cold weather	wife - son	E.S.L. Teacher
francisco Escobar	Guatemala	Farmer	Factory worker	cold weather	3 brothers	speak english,..
oscar ventura	Honduras	self employed	cashier	the weather	one brother	speak english
Angela Araujo	Brazil	Secretary	Babysitter	cold weather	husband, son @ Daughter	a house. green card
Douglas matute	Honduras	dental assistant	Factory worker	cold	mother, brother sister, nephew uncle	my wife & son come U.S.
Patricia Villagran	el salvador	student	cashier	cold	Brother @ Sister	speak english
* I did it with 28 Students it took me 2 hours class		→	→	→	→	

Alfabetización
Harborside C. C.

Segundo Nivel

Nombre	Pais	Trabajos en su pais	Trabajos en este Pais	Personas que viven con ud. en este pais de su familia	Personas en su pais que son importanta de su familia	Personas afectadas porque ud. está aprendiendo	¿Por qué?
Abelino Sarabria	El Salvador	No trabajé.	Restaurante	Nadie	Mi madre	Ninguna	porque no sabe que estoy aprendiendo.
Israel Majuno	El Salvador	Agricultor	Fabrica de lamparas/oro	2 hermanos, mi cuñada 3h	Mis padres.	Mi hermano y mi cuñada	Porque ahora no pregunto tanto.
Efrain Figueroa	El Salvador	Agricultor	limpieza	4 hermanos	Mis padres 9 hermanos.	13 miembros de mi familia.	porque los ayudo a todos.
Luis Mendez	El Salvador	Agricultor/ chofer	lavar platos mesas limpieza construcción	Mi esposa, mi hija, mis dos hermanos	Mi mamá, mis dos hijos, 3 hermanos.	Mi esposa y mis hermanos	Porque me animan a seguir adelante.
Camilo Merino	El Salvador	Agricultor	lavar platos	Mi hermano	Mi esposa mis 3 hijos	Mi esposa y mis hijos	Porque me comunico mejor con ellos.

STUDENT PROFILE CHART
2nd level
Harborside Spanish Literacy

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

What brought the students to literacy and ESL classes?

In order to get a sense of students' reasons for coming to class, and to assess the significance of the classes in their lives, we interviewed students from each site at the end of the project (see Appendices for interview questions). We asked them to talk about what their lives were like before joining the project and why it was important for them to learn to read and write or to learn English (depending on the context). In addition, we asked them how their lives had changed since they had begun the classes (their responses to this question are included in Chapter 5).

I never thought it would make a difference...

Literacy students often said that they had lived here for years without considering going to school; they didn't have confidence that they would be able to learn, or understand what a difference being able to read and write might make.

> ***I wasn't aware of many things I didn't know. I have been in this country for 9 years but I never thought that learning to read and write could make a difference in my life. If I had known that, I could have started before and I could have gotten a better job already. I hadn't known how beautiful learning to read and write was, and how important it is. I was a little scared because I thought that learning was for children or young people, but I found that there are many opportunities for adults also.***

At the same time, however, they often said that they endured many difficulties because of their lack of literacy. They often talked about the desire for independence as a motivation for learning.

One of the most common things that students said is that, before learning to read and write, they were vulnerable to being taken advantage of by others. One student, for example, told the story of paying his utility bills through a friend; he noticed that he had to give more and more money each month because the bill kept getting bigger. He finally went and asked why the bill was so large and discovered that his friend had been keeping half of the money for himself each month. He pulled a knife on the man and might have ended in prison except for the fact that, when they went to court, it was discovered that the other person had a criminal record.

Now I can do it myself...

Both literacy and ESL students talked about the desire to overcome this kind of dependence as a reason for wanting to learn. A Spanish literacy student, for example, said:

> *When I came to this country, I needed to find somebody to write a letter for me and now I can write it. I feel good about it because I can write anything I want. You are not able to express your real feelings when somebody is writing for you. You can only say the most important things. I can go to a bank and try to fill out papers. I can try to find out where I am by reading. I can communicate more with my family.*

An ESL student expressed a similar motivation:

> *I was in the hospital 7 months pregnant, not able to say a word in English. And later on, when he was born, my son was giving me trouble because his life was in danger. I felt lost, isolated, with a newborn baby and with the problem of having to depend on an interpreter for everything. Whenever I had to take him to the hospital for a check-up or just for anything else, I used to see white people, and I felt they were colder; maybe it was my insecurity at being in this country without knowing the language.*

The same student talked about intangible reasons for learning - not only becoming independent, but also, gaining a sense of confidence:

I have walked a good distance...

> *It was important to me to learn English so that I could be independent from my family. I used to need my family's help even to go shopping. Now I feel I have walked a good distance. I am not afraid anymore. I have a lot more self-confidence. I can read English. I can understand when people talk to me and overall, I don't feel isolated.*

It was often these intangible reasons that were the first reason for coming to class, rather than an immediate desire to get a job. Literacy students especially saw work-related goals as less immediate than being able to communicate better with family members. When asked what his hopes were, one student said:

> *I want to learn more Spanish: I need to improve my writing because I can read more than write. I want to write more to my family. After that, I want to learn English and look for a better job.*

These excerpts give a sense of the range of student motivations for coming to class. What was striking about their responses is that they focused as much on affective and family-related reasons for participating as on narrowly functional reasons.

Chapter Three: The Training Component

Although the underlying approach to training was the same for both the BCLTP and the CTAFL, the design of the training was different in the two projects. Because we had experience with two different training designs, we were able to compare the effectiveness of various design factors. This chapter looks at the common underlying approach to training, the differences between the two projects, the ways that each training component was structured, and the issues that emerged in training Interns.

What was the approach to training?

the guiding principle

The guiding principle for our approach to training was the belief that the way that we conducted the training should be consistent with our approach to teaching: we wanted to practice (in training) what we were preaching (about teaching). Since our approach to literacy education was a participatory one, our goal was to make the training itself participatory. The Mentors characterized some of the ways we did this as follows:

- ***We started by trying to make people feel comfortable in the training.***
- ***We didn't tell people what to do. We tried to challenge their idea that training meant learning techniques.***
- ***We tried to let the Interns participate or talk more than us.***
- ***Most of what happened in the workshops came from the Interns. We used Interns' experiences as examples.***
- ***We tried to demystify the belief that we as 'trainers' were experts who had all the answers.***
- ***We didn't give solutions to problems, but created a context for figuring them out.***

Embedded in these comments are three key aspects of a participatory approach that we modeled in the training: 1) the notion of transforming teacher-learner relations; 2) the notion of the negotiated or emergent curriculum; and 3) the notion of inquiry and experience-based learning. These notions constituted the theoretical framework that informed our approach to training. The next section will look at each of these notions and their implications for training.

Teacher-learner relations

According to Freire (1970), both the content and the processes of education can either reinforce or challenge the powerlessness of marginalized people. Traditionally, the teacher is seen as the expert whose task is to transmit knowledge, filling learners with new information or skills which learners receive passively. Learners' own knowledge and realities are excluded from the classroom. This teacher-centered process, Freire says, leaves learners silenced and powerless to act on the conditions that marginalize them.

In participatory education, transforming teacher-learner roles is central to enabling learners to assume more control of the direction of their lives. Education becomes a context for understanding and challenging the forces that maintain their powerlessness. Thus, the educational process should both model changes in power relations inside the classroom and allow learners to rehearse for changes in the their roles outside it. The learners' experience and knowledge are seen to be the starting point of participatory curriculum development. The teacher's task is to draw out this knowledge and involve learners in determining the goals and content of education. Thus, learners are not seen as passive consumers, but as active contributors. This new role inside the classroom lays the groundwork for challenging inequalities outside the classroom: through sharing and comparing experiences, reflecting critically on them and developing joint strategies for change, learners move toward changing the conditions which have left them powerless. In this process, the acquisition of skills is contextualized in critical reflection.

Implications for training

The following principles, derived from participatory education theory, were central in informing our approach to training;

- ***The goal is not just a transfer of skills or techniques: it is to address real problems and take action for change.***
- ***The starting point is the experience of the participants. Participants' needs and concerns should be incorporated in training.***
- ***There are no experts. Everyone teaches, everyone learns.***
- ***The collective knowledge of participants develops through dialogue and sharing.***
- ***Skills and techniques should not be presented in isolation; they should be related to reflection and analysis.***

the emergent curriculum

Since the content in a participatory approach centers around issues and experiences of learners, the curriculum emerges through interaction with them. It is based not on needs assessment done before instruction begins, but on collaborative investigation of critical issues affecting learners; this investigation is integrated with the instruction itself. Thus, rather than having a pre-specified syllabus, its content emerges. The particular steps of this process depend to some extent on the context. Regardless of the particular formulation, the general sequence is a cyclical process of investigation, identification of themes, dialogue, critical reflection, acquisition of skills, action, and further reflection (evaluation).

implications for training

We adapted the following processes from this framework in developing the training curriculum:

- ***Investigation:*** Needs assessment is based on the lived experience of participants, not on the analysis of outside 'experts'; participants engage in this investigation as part of the learning process.

- ***Dialogue and reflection:*** Participants share experiences and relate these experiences to an analysis of the broader social context; this process validates everyone's knowledge and becomes the basis for creating new knowledge. As participants situate their own knowledge in the context of others' experience and look for connections or generalizations, they gain a more critical understanding of their own experience.

- ***Problem-posing:*** Participants address problems or concerns from their day to day reality through a collective sharing of strategies; solutions come not from experts, but from group resources; by exchanging ideas and experiences, participants work together to develop ways of addressing problems.

- ***Action:*** Participants act to change some aspect of their social context based on strategies developed through dialogue, reflection and problem-posing. They try something new in order to resolve or address a problem they have identified.

- ***Evaluation:*** Participants assess the effectiveness of their work, reflecting on what happened, why it happened, what they learned and might do differently. Thus, evaluation itself is participatory, and part of the learning process itself; it informs subsequent curriculum development.

Inquiry-based learning

The notions of learning through observation, investigation, reflection and dialogue are integral to the process described above. If information is not transmitted, participants must become actively involved in constructing it. In participatory education, this process is started through the carefully structured elicitation of participants' experience; participants learn how to gather information, name or identify issues, and analyze them. They address problems by sharing experiences and strategizing together in a problem-posing process, rather than seeking solutions from outside experts.

Implications for training

These principles and processes are very much congruent with the current emphasis on practitioner research, inquiry-based staff development, and experiential, problem-oriented learning in teacher education (Lytle, 1992). A central notion of current teacher education theory is that effective teaching is not achieved through the implementation of a teaching technology, but rather through critical responsiveness to learners. Training in specific classroom methods, behaviors or techniques in itself doesn't prepare teachers for the complex reality of the classroom; it is the ability to discover needs and decide how to act on them that makes good teachers. Thus, what teachers need is not a prescription for what to do and how to do it, but rather investigative skills and a conceptual framework for making-decisions (Gebhardt et al, 1990). This framework can best be developed through observation, practice, and reflection in the context of dialogue and analysis with a community of experienced teachers and knowledgeable peers. We applied this theory to our own work through the following processes:

- *modeling:* learning new instructional techniques and processes by actively participating in trying them out and/or observing someone else try them;

- *teacher-sharing:* dialogue about plans, issues and concerns in which peers share ideas and approaches, reflecting together on practice;

- *problem-posing:* a specific structured process for addressing problems of classroom practice in which peers share experiences, analyze causes of problems and collaboratively develop strategies for addressing them.

training components

As the chapter on project structure states, the training design had three components:

- ***classroom-based mentoring*** *during which Interns observed and worked alongside experienced Mentors;*
- ***site-based teacher sharing meetings*** *during which the Mentor and Interns at each site shared planning, issues, and concerns;*
- ***university-based workshops*** *during which project participants developed a conceptual framework for teaching, explored classroom tools and shared experiences with participants from other sites and invited outside facilitators.*

These components were closely related, starting with and going back to what was happening in the classrooms. The teacher-sharing meetings focused on what the Interns and Mentors were doing with students; the issues and concerns that arose in the teacher-sharing meetings were, in turn, brought into the training workshops. As Julio said, ***"Training was a chain: We saw things that happened in the classrooms and we talked about them in the training meetings."***

Implementation of the components

The ways that each component was implemented differed in the first and second projects (the BCLTP and the CTAFL). Several structural differences including the time frame, funding, and number of participating Interns shaped implementation of the model in each project.

First, the BCLTP was a three year project with three ten-month training sequences whereas the CTAFL was a one-year project of which, in fact, only seven months could actually be devoted to training. As with any project, the first several months of the CTAFL were devoted to start-up activities (including securing and accessing funding, setting up budgetary mechanisms, hiring, consolidating the staff, selecting Interns, setting up a training plan, and developing the evaluation plan). Because the grant did not include funding for Intern stipends (unlike the BCLTP) and anticipated state funding did not materialize, the sites had to devote considerable time and energy to fund-raising for this aspect of the project. Logistical difficulties (including not actually receiving any money until four months after the project start date) also occupied much of our energy during the start-up phase. All of these factors resulted in the anticipated ten-month training cycle being shortened to seven months.

Two other structural differences resulted from these time and funding constraints for the CTAFL. First, we were able to piece together funding for only six Interns in the CTAFL (compared with at least twelve during each year of the BCLTP). Second, there was pressure to compress the training workshops into a shorter period of time, with workshops every two weeks instead of once a month. The following chart represents differences in the design of each component of the BCLTP and the CTAFL:

Component	BCLTP	CTAFL
Mentoring	•each Mentor worked with at least four Interns •ten month Mentoring period •variable cycles of observing, co-teaching and independent teaching •Curriculum Specialist rotated between sites to act as Mentor	•each Mentor worked with two Interns •seven month Mentoring period •variable cycles of observing, co-teaching and independent teaching •no Curriculum Specialist
teacher-sharing meetings	•regular weekly meetings •documented through minutes	•bi-weekly meetings; less regular •no minutes
workshops	•monthly •three hours •Saturday mornings •several outside speakers •planned in a participatory way •up to twenty participants at each workshop	•bi-weekly •two hours •Friday afternoons •one outside speaker •planned primarily by Coordinator •eleven participants at each workshop

What happened in the mentoring component?

The descriptions of each component on the following pages draw on features of both projects. They present the more elaborated process which was possible with adequate time and funding, as well as the process we implemented when time and funding were more constrained. The advantages and disadvantages of each model are examined in the Conclusion.

Mentoring cycles

The model specified in the project proposal outlines a formal sequence of three month cycles moving from observation to co-teaching to independent teaching for Interns; however, the reality was that different Interns were ready for increased responsibility at different rates. In general, Interns with little teaching experience spent a longer time working alongside an experienced teacher and Interns with more experience transitioned into independent teaching more quickly. Some Interns, however, were uncomfortable teaching on their own even after two cycles - they didn't want to let go of the Mentor; others were anxious to begin with their own groups after only one cycle - they wanted to let go of the Mentor as quickly as possible. In addition, the sites needed to have a Mentor teach specific classes or hours in order to cover their course offerings. Thus, we tried to set up mentoring in a flexible, context-specific way in order to meet the needs of individual Interns and to accommodate the schedules of the sites. In practice this meant that there was a range of models:

- Interns at one of the sites followed the pre-specified three cycle plan quite closely; they worked in the classroom of the Mentor for two cycles and then taught independently.

- In another, some of the experienced Interns began teaching right away, while others worked side-by-side in the Mentor's classroom for two cycles; in one case, an Intern worked first in the Mentor's class for one cycle and then in the class of a more experienced Intern before going on to take his own class.

- In the third site, the Mentor moved between two classes, spending two days a week with each of the Interns, so that they taught independently part of the week and with him the rest.

Mentoring principles

The guiding principle for mentoring was always that its purpose was mutual learning among peers rather than evaluation or prescription. We tried to establish an atmosphere in which Interns and Mentors would observe and learn from each other, rather than having Mentors observe or model for Interns in a hierarchical or didactic way. We started this process with a training workshop that explored the following principles for observation:

- *Everybody learns; nobody evaluates.*

- *Describe, don't prescribe.*

- *Separate out what is happening from how you feel about it.*

- *Leave control in the hands of the person being observed. Let him/her decide what to focus on; the observer acts like a mirror so the person being observed can see him/herself differently.*

- *Don't tell the person being observed what to do or do better. Let him/her generate strategies and alternatives.*

Mentors' responsibilities

Thus, it was up to the Interns to determine how they wanted to interact with the Mentors, depending on what they were comfortable with. In practice, this meant that the Mentors were called upon to carry out the following kinds of responsibilities:

- modeling or demonstrating a particular kind of activity or task
- observing Interns and giving feedback or making suggestions
- designing activities for the Interns to do
- relegating specific responsibilities to Interns
- planning lessons with the Interns
- assisting with materials development (eg. typing up a language experience story and suggesting how it might be used)
- facilitating the resolution of tensions between Interns

In addition, Mentors might identify an issue or positive practice to share with the others at the weekly meeting, or a more general issue to be dealt with at a training workshop. For example, if Interns seemed to have difficulty knowing how to respond to students' errors, he/she might bring this to the attention of the rest of the staff so that it could be addressed in a training workshop. In addition to more formal mentoring, there was a great deal of informal peer-observation and sharing.

What happened in the teacher-sharing component?

Each site had periodic site-based meetings in which Mentors and Interns discussed their practice. In the BCLTP, these meetings took place each week, and were in some cases carefully documented with minutes. In the CTAFL, the meetings took place less regularly and were less structured because of scheduling conflicts and funding constraints; in many cases, the sites deemed it more important to utilize the Interns' limited hours at the site in direct teaching rather than in meeting time. Thus, what follows describes the most elaborated version of teacher-sharing (its most 'ideal' form) rather than the norm for these meetings.

Teacher-sharing meetings were a place for Mentors and Interns to discuss classroom practice (both past and future). In keeping with a participatory approach, they were intended to support Interns' development in a non-directive way, with Mentors and Interns learning from each other (rather than Mentors telling Interns what to do). The particular content and format of these meetings varied from site to site and within a given site. They were generally a time for Interns and Mentors:

functions of teacher-sharing

- to reflect on what they did during the past week
- to plan for the subsequent week
- to share positive teaching strategies, experiences and activities
- to pose and discuss problems emerging from teaching
- to discuss materials and to share resources
- to develop materials
- to evaluate training workshops
- to figure out whether/how training content could be adapted for use at the site
- to identify topics for future training workshops
- to address tensions among Interns or between the Mentor and Interns
- to discuss logistical matters (scheduling, pay, recruitment, etc.)

One of the most important functions of the teacher-sharing meetings in this model is to link the training workshops and the work at the sites. Sometimes this occurred most effectively when one Intern had missed a workshop and others had to report back about it. These site-based discussions of the trainings helped the Interns explore issues and ideas more openly, take ownership of the ideas, and concretely evaluate whether/how to apply them in their own work. Similarly, issues arose at the teacher-sharing meetings which suggested topics for further exploration at the training workshops.

A possible process for teacher-sharing...

The following skeletal format represents a possible problem-posing process for structuring teacher-sharing meetings.

1. *Report back:* Participants quickly go around the table reporting what they did in class during the past week, noting particular problem areas or successes.

2. *Identify an issue/theme/topic for exploration:* The facilitator tries to identify some significant teaching issue, concern or theme. It can be a common issue (that recurs in several Interns' accounts of their practice), a particularly pressing concern of one person, or an example which others might learn from. The facilitator either reflects back what he/she sees as a theme for further exploration or asks participants what they would like to focus on. Alternatively, the facilitator can bring in an issue that he/she has noted by observing Interns' practice. In any case, the issue is re-presented as a question/description, rather than as a criticism /solution.

3. *Reflect on the issue through structured dialogue:* The group collectively reflects on the theme, addressing questions like: What was the problem here? Why did this happen? What are the roots of this problem? Have you experienced anything like this? What did you/might you do in a situation like this? Why? In discussing positive examples of practice, we explore questions like: What were the steps in the process? Why was it so successful? How would you change it next time?

4. *Propose alternatives/strategies:* Each participant (including the facilitator/Mentor) suggests how he/she might follow up on the issue with learners. At this point the facilitator can present new information, ideas, activities or theory to deepen the discussion. After a range of possibilities is generated, the group discusses possible plans of action each Intern feels comfortable with, giving the choice back to Interns with questions like: What might you like to try from this discussion? What ideas did you get from this discussion for your class? No one is told that they should do anything; rather, each Intern takes what they want from the discussion.

benefits of teacher-sharing

Teacher-sharing has several benefits. It is a non-judgmental way of dealing with unevenness or weaknesses in Interns' practice; for example, when one Mentor felt uncomfortable about the way an Intern was handling corrections, rather than telling her she was doing it incorrectly, the issue was brought back to the group as a 'neutral' topic. The group generated a range of strategies; everyone was invited to look over the alternatives, choose a new strategy to try, and evaluate its effectiveness (and eventually the topic was brought to the monthly workshops for further exploration). This process depersonalizes the issue, allowing for mutual learning and development through inquiry rather than prescription.

In another case, a Mentor noted that at one point Interns didn't seem to be doing much planning for classes, usually followed a mechanical approach to instruction, and didn't try to implement the tools we had been exploring in the training workshops. Rather than reprimanding them or telling them to change, he suggested that they evaluate the workshops and classes. He started by asking for feedback about the workshops and then asked questions like the following to facilitate dialogue:

- What do you think we are doing well in the classes?
- What can we do better?
- How are you using the workshops?
- What have you brought into the classroom from workshops?
- What are your goals for the rest of the cycle?

After this discussion, the Interns began changing their practice; the Mentor reported that one Intern stopped using the book to drive lessons and stopped focusing on syllables in isolation - instead she began using information elicited from students to teach them.

Teacher sharing is also particularly effective in validating Interns' knowledge: when Mentors observe a particularly effective lesson, they can invite the Intern to share it at the meeting so others can learn from it. As Interns share their practice among knowledgeable peers, they gain ideas but also begin to reflect more critically on their own practice. In addition, if careful minutes are taken of teacher-sharing meetings, this documentation can become a tool for the evaluation of training and teaching.

challenges of teacher-sharing

Of course, there are also challenges in teacher-sharing. The three most common problems we had were scheduling meetings, balancing concrete planning with open-ended dialogue/reflection, and addressing tensions between Interns. There never seemed to be enough time for everything!

What happened in the training workshops?

Although the workshops are presented last here, in some ways they provided the unifying framework for the other components. They brought together all of the participants from each site and provided a context for working through concerns about practice. In this section, the process for planning the workshops, their structure and the sequence of topics are presented. Part II presents the actual content of the workshops in the form of modules which others may want to adapt.

our approach to designing workshops

We developed training workshops through interaction with Interns, rather than pre-determining a training curriculum which specified skills, competencies or topics. Of course, we started with an overall sense of the direction, content and processes for the workshops. By the end of the workshops, we hoped that Interns would have a grasp of a **conceptual framework for participatory literacy/ESL instruction** as well as a sense of how to develop curricula based on themes from learners' lives. We hoped they would be comfortable with each of the following steps of this **participatory curriculum development process**:

Listening to find important concerns and themes in students' lives

- Using **catalysts** and **conscious listening** to discover what is important to learners

Re-presenting themes as lesson content

- Utilizing a range of **tools** to present and develop themes
- Facilitating **dialogue** about the themes
- Introducing **language/literacy work** related to the theme (key words, readings, grammar, writing, etc.)

Taking action outside the classroom based on new understanding and proficiencies

Evaluating learning and action

What was the process and format of each workshop?

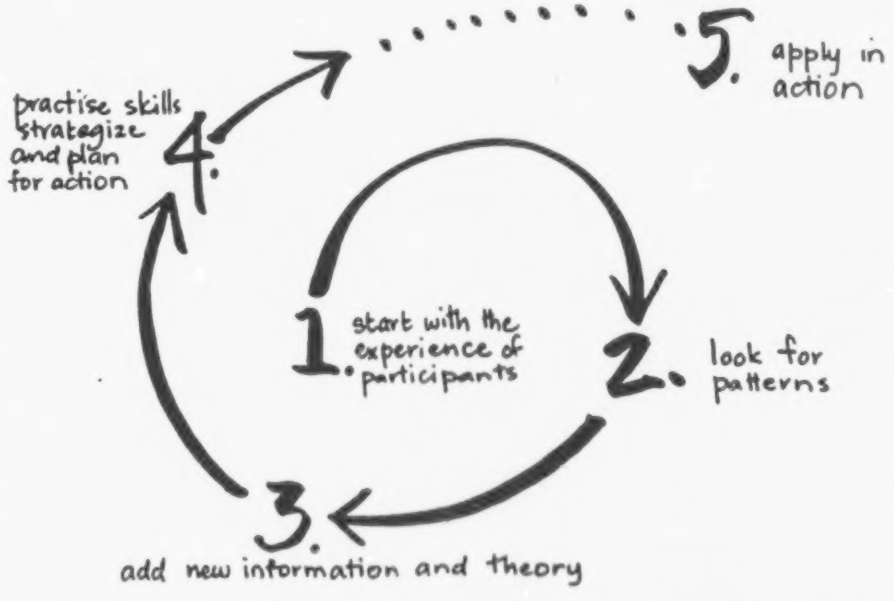
process goals

We had several process goals for the workshops:

- to incorporate the Interns' concerns and experiences
- to trigger active participation
- to promote dialogue
- to create space for participants to learn from each other
- to model activities; to teach by showing rather than telling
- to involve participants in determining workshop content

general format

For these reasons, we tried to always start with participants' experiences, eliciting what they had done in the intervening weeks since we had seen each other. We then introduced new information or concepts through a presentation, creating space for participants to relate it to their own experiences. We went on to do some kind of hands-on, participatory activity to demonstrate a tool which Interns could use with students. We then discussed how the Interns might use what they had learned at their sites (an action plan). Finally, we elicited feedback and suggestions for future workshops. The following diagram illustrates the general pattern that our workshops followed. Our model also included evaluation of the workshop itself.


5. apply in action
4. practise skills strategize and plan for action
1. start with the experience of participants
2. look for patterns
3. add new information and theory

from Educating for a Change (Arnold et al, 1991: 38)

How did we plan workshops?

In the first project (BCLTP), when we had a month between workshops, the entire staff spent several hours planning each workshop at a meeting which took place between workshops. We were able to elicit feedback from the previous workshop before planning the subsequent one. Because workshops were held every two weeks in the second project (CTAFL) and staff meetings took place on the day of the workshop itself (right before it), there was less time for collaborative planning. In the second project, we were unable to get feedback from one workshop before planning the next. Thus, the planning was much less participatory, with consequences which will be discussed in the Evaluation chapter. The following section describes the process we followed in the BCLTP since it was more participatory and closer to our ideal of how planning should take place.

Identifying needs and topics

Possible topics were determined in a number of ways. At the beginning, we identified topics based on our own objectives for setting the tone of the training. Right from the start, though, we tried to get Interns' input about their own needs and goals by asking them why they were participating in the project and what they hoped to get out of it. As we proceeded, we also listened for specific issues, requests or problem areas that came up during the course of workshops and follow-up evaluations; in some cases, Interns themselves identified problems (for example, they wanted to focus on finding materials for native language literacy); in others, we identified issues through our own observations of their practice (for example, Mentors noted at one point that Interns needed to refine their approach to responding to errors; at another point, an Intern cut off a heated dialogue because he didn't know how to integrate it with literacy work; subsequent workshops focused on responding to errors and facilitating dialogue, respectively).

We also structured specific activities during workshops to elicit topics for subsequent sessions. Mid-way through the CTAFL, for example, Interns identified the following issues as topics for workshops: multi-level classes, the teacher's role, assessment, and student participation. Thus, overall, our own process for determining training topics modeled the participatory approach in that the training curriculum was emergent and negotiated. We ourselves practiced active listening and structured elicitation to identify Interns' needs.

determining objectives

Once the topic had been selected, we discussed objectives in greater detail. The bottom line questions were, "Why is this workshop important? What do we hope that Interns will come away with in this session?" The answers to these questions then helped us determine activities.

choosing activities

After developing some objectives, we brainstormed activities which would allow us to get at the topic interactively and to model the process or tool being presented. If we weren't sure how to begin planning, we sometimes started just by talking about our own practice as teachers in dealing with the topic at hand. We then tried to generalize and identify aspects of the topic that we should explore in the workshop. At this point, we didn't try to put activities into a sequence.

doing our homework

Once the group had fleshed out a general set of objectives and possible activities for a session, we did some further research to find activities or information that might supplement our preliminary ideas. We looked at a variety of participatory education/literacy/ESL guides (see Resources), at ESL texts, and at resources we had developed ourselves in other projects. From these, we got ideas for activities, as well as articles and examples to use as handouts. Mentors brought in examples of how they addressed a particular issue in their own practice. In addition, we consulted colleagues about how they designed workshops on specified topics.

developing a plan

The next step was to pull together the ideas and information into a sequence of activities. Although we did not consciously follow a pre-determined format or schema for the workshops, we tried to keep in mind the overall goals for the workshops listed above (starting with participants' experiences, reflecting on the individual experiences as a group, presenting new material, doing an activity to model the tool, coming back together for more reflection and evaluation). We planned a variety of participant structures or groupings so that Interns could work in pairs, in small groups with people from their own sites, in small groups with people from other sites, and in a large group.

fine-tuning logistics

The final step in the planning process was working out logistical details - who would facilitate which parts of the workshop, how long each segment would take, and who would be responsible for bringing materials, props, etc. We tried to divide the responsibilities so that each staff member would have some role in facilitating or presenting, depending on what he/she felt comfortable doing. In addition, as the project developed, we increasingly invited Interns to take some role in the training. Timing was a persistent and inevitable problem: we always planned too much and what we planned always took longer than expected. Thus, one of our final jobs was to think realistically about how long each part might take and what to do in case something took longer than expected.

What was the sequence of workshops topics?

Although the sequence of topics roughly corresponded to the steps of participatory curriculum development outlined earlier, the actual order of presentation, types of activities and particular content were determined according to the process just described. The following pages present the two sequences of workshop topics developed in the BCLTP and the CTAFL. Most sessions focused on a general concept or topic and modeled specific tools for use with learners. Specific workshop activities are described in Part II.

Sequence I (BCLTP)

Session #1: Conceptual framework: *What is a participatory approach?*

Tool: Using photographs to explore learning experiences

Session #2: Listening to find important concerns in learners' lives: *What's an issue or a theme? How do you find issues?*

Tools: 'Ways In' to student issues/themes (photos, grammar exercises, conscious listening)

Sessions #3-7: Exploring themes through dialogue, language and literacy work

What do you do with an issue once you find it? How do you use an issue to extend analysis and literacy? What is problem-posing and what forms can it take?

Session #3 Tool:	Language Experience Approach
Session #4 Tool:	Making and using codes
Session #5 Tool:	Theater and socio-drama
Session #6 Tool:	Problem-posing trees
Session #7 Tool:	Photostories

Session #8: Action to address problems and make changes in practice: *How do you make the transition from theory to practice in teaching literacy/ESL?*

Tool: Problem-posing trees (using problem-posing to address classroom concerns)

Session #9: Evaluation to determine where we've been and where we want to go (Jan. 1992)

Sessions #10 - 15: Issues of practice for further exploration (identified through evaluation):

Session #10: *What is the relationship between politics and literacy? How does politics relate to literacy work?*
Session #11: *How do we work with students just making the transition into beginning ESL?*
Session #12: *How can we use games to teach literacy and ESL?*
Session #13: *What can we learn from literacy campaigns in third world countries?*
Session #14: *How can we assess student progress?*
Session #15: *How can we assess our own learning?*

Sequence II (CTAFL)

Session #1: **Group profile and goals**: *Who are we and what do we hope to get out of this training?*

Tools: Interviews, Profile Charts, Lifelines

Session #2: **Overview of adult learning**; **finding learners' needs, strengths and goals**: *How do adults learn best? How can we find out what they can already do, need, and want to learn?*

Tools: 'Ways In' to student issues/themes (photos, charts and maps)

Session #3: **Classroom observation**: *How can we learn from each other and our own classrooms?*

Tools: Observation formats and techniques

Session #4: **Overview of participatory curriculum development**: *How can we find 'hot spots' in our classrooms? How can we use themes to develop curriculum? What are our own 'hot spots' or teaching issues that we want to explore further?*

Tools: Conscious listening; worry circles

Session #5: **Using student issues for ESL and literacy development**: *What can we do with themes once we find them?*

Tools: Codes

Session #6: **Using codes to promote dialogue and student participation**: *How can we engage students in dialogue once themes have been identified?*

Tools: Dialogue questions

Session #7: **From dialogue to literacy/ESL work**: *How do we connect dialogue and discussion with specific learning activities to develop learners' ESL/literacy proficiency?*

Tools: Language Experience Approach

Session #8: **Linking literacy with action**: *How do you develop curriculum around a loaded theme? How do you link what happens in class with action outside the class?*

Tools: Breast cancer curriculum units

Session #9: **Using and developing materials**: *How can you use, adapt, and develop materials for native language literacy classes?*

Session #10: **Finding and evaluating materials**: *Visit to the Adult Literacy Resource Institute*

Session #11: **Assessing student progress**: *How do you know if students are learning?*

Tools: Student assessment tool kit

Session #12: **Assessing student progress** (cont.); **Dialogue journals**

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So what ever happened to Family Literacy?

You may have been wondering, as you read, where the 'family literacy' was in the Community Training for Adult and ***Family Literacy*** *project. There are a number of reasons that none of the workshop sessions are called "family literacy:"*

what counts as family literacy?

Much of what we did with students really was family literacy, even though it wasn't labeled as such: enabling parents to advocate for services for their children, to send a letter to family members, to become less dependent on children, to fill out a money order, to look for a job, and to discuss sexually transmitted diseases with teenagers certainly counts as developing family literacy in its truest sense. As Ana said, ***"If family literacy means reading bedtime stories, we, as educators, are sunk."*** We worked on the assumption that family literacy is more than a label or a lesson: it was is using literacy in a socially significant way to address family concerns and to strengthen adults' ability to care for their families. Based on this concept, we chose not to limit our exploration of family literacy to a particular session or to define it as a particular set of behaviors, activities, and family interactions.

participatory topic selection

A second reason that family literacy was not a workshop topic related to the participatory nature of our approach to training: we were committed to involving Interns in topic selection and gearing sessions to their needs. Whenever we elicited their input about topics for subsequent sessions, there were always more ideas than weeks left, but family literacy was never one of them. When we suggested it, Interns resisted. Family literacy was clearly not their priority and we did not feel that we could impose it. However, at various points, issues related to family literacy arose organically: for example, during the session on codes, the issue of children acting as interpreters for their parents emerged. Thus, while Interns were uninterested in exploring family literacy if we introduced it, they were open to it if the issues came from them.

learner population

Finally, the nature of the learner population may have shaped participants' priorities. None of the sites limited enrollment in project classes to parents because they wanted to serve the broadest possible number of students in need of services. At the JMCS, a class funded through another grant restricted enrollment to the parents of children in public schools; only eight students signed up for that class whereas there was a waiting list of several hundred for the other classes. Thus, students in our classes came from a variety of family situations and not all saw family literacy as a priority.

Training Issues...

There was a cyclical recurrence of issues that emerged in the workshops. Some of these issues pertain to the general approach to teaching adult literacy, some to the workshops themselves, and some to the relationship between training and teaching (site-based practice). This section will summarize key training issues and explain our processes for addressing them, ending with guidelines for training which came out of our cumulative experience struggling with them. For each of the issues listed below, there were different perspectives among Interns and changes in perspective within any given Intern through the course of the project.

"What method are we supposed to use?" In the first project, many Interns started out wanting us to provide recipes for practice and to tell them what to do in the classroom: they were looking for a method or techniques that could be applied directly from the trainings to teaching. In part, this may have been due to the fact that the project was called a "training" project - the name itself suggested that they would be taught skills. The initial focus on exploring a conceptual framework and a process for generating context-specific curricula seemed frustrating or confusing for some. While they expected us to tell them the "right way" to teach, we wanted them to experiment, discover, reflect, adapt and figure out for themselves what would make sense in their own contexts. We had to find a balance between establishing a guiding conceptual framework and providing practical, hands-on content that they could use immediately. This was less of an issue during the second project, in part because we had stated in our letter to Interns that we see teaching as an art, and would not be focusing on techniques; in addition, from the very first workshop, we explicitly 'named' those activities which could be used with students and included time to plan for classroom applications.

"Where's the curriculum?" Similarly, some of the Interns felt strongly that the project or the sites should give them a curriculum or a list of what is to be covered at each level. At the same time, their accounts of successful lessons often involved not following a pre-planned sequence of activities but responding to student issues that arose spontaneously or as a result of a trigger activity. Thus, there was a tension between the legitimate need of new teachers for a guiding curriculum and the notion that the most effective curricula are those that integrate ongoing student issues and emerge through negotiation with students.

"What do the experts say?" A related issue was the sense, among some Interns, that outside experts had the 'answers' - that there was some external body of knowledge about how to teach literacy the 'right' way. At times, some felt that the information of an outside expert was more valuable than their own knowledge or that constructed by the group through sharing, dialogue and reflection. Yet, very often the workshops that the Interns responded most positively to and were most engaged in were the ones in which they shared their own experiences and practice with each other. Thus, one of our tasks became the demystification of the 'everybody else knows better' view.

"Why are we talking about unemployment? This is not a jobs agency." Since many of the Interns had experienced only a very traditional, teacher-centered and skills-based approach in their own education and had learned to read using a decontextualized, bottom-up phonics method, there was some resistance to a meaning-centered approach, particularly for teaching initial literacy. It was a struggle for some Interns to see dialogue about student concerns as relevant to literacy education or as a possible context within which to teach skills. A central issue about the content of the training, thus, was whether we should be following a mechanical (skills-based, teacher-centered) approach, a participatory (meaning-based, learner-centered) approach to literacy, or somehow integrate the two approaches.

"That doesn't apply to my students." The diversity among and within sites challenged us to ensure that we were addressing the particular needs of everyone while not excluding anyone. Since participants were teaching in three different languages, with some ESL and some native language literacy, and with students at a variety of levels both within and between classes, the challenge was great. What might work for ESL context might seem irrelevant for L1 literacy. In this sense, our group mirrored the situation of many ESL classes in its multiplicity of levels and needs. As trainers, we faced the same question that teachers face: how could we find common areas for training when the particular needs were so different?

"I didn't have time to do that." At almost every workshop, we invited Interns to try something that we had modeled; sometimes we handed out short readings including background information, examples of lessons, or teachers' accounts of practice utilizing the tools we were focusing on in the session. Frequently, however, Interns came back to the next session and reported that they had not had time to implement the activity or read the handouts. In many cases, the activity did not fit organically with whatever was going on in class. Because the readings were in English, they may have been difficult for some of the Interns to read.

How did we address training issues?

One of the great challenges in responding to training issues was to balance the Interns' expectations with our perceptions of what would benefit them. This, of course, is precisely the challenge that teachers face in working with adult learners; very often learners have Internalized the traditional model of education which has been least productive for them. Similarly, when Interns came into the sessions during the first project, they expected and asked to be taught techniques; they wanted to be told exactly what to do in class and they especially liked the idea of outside experts coming in to do this. We had to figure out how, on the one hand, to address these desires, and on the other, to be true to our own philosophy of literacy education. We negotiated differences between Interns' expectations and the project agenda in a variety of ways:

- ***by including concrete classroom related activities which incorporated learners' realities in each workshop***

- ***by posing training issues back to participants for dialogue and reflection***
  For example, the issue of expertise was addressed by creating multiple opportunities for Interns to compare the knowledge they constructed themselves with that provided by experts.

- ***by involving Interns in the selection of topics for workshops***

- ***by using training issues as content in the modeling of tools***
  For example, we made codes about tensions between different needs in order to demonstrate the use of codes.

- ***by making our own rationale for designing a workshop explicit***
  We talked about our own process of identifying issues and incorporating them into training.

- ***by including many opportunities for peer-learning***
  For example, the issue of corrections was addressed by presenting it back to Interns and eliciting alternatives from the group.

The Interns' changing notions of what was important and how they wanted the sessions to be structured was one of the indicators of the development of their conceptions of education. Whereas at the beginning of the first project, many wanted to be told what to do, one of their criticisms in the second project was that they didn't have enough time to talk to each other.

Guidelines for workshops

The following guidelines reflect what we learned through our practice, including both DO's and DON'T's - what was effective and what was problematic.

•Involve Interns in the selection of topics. Link presentations to work at the sites, using examples from Interns' practice or from the shared experience of the group.

•Link content to participants' life experience as immigrants and learners as well as their experience as teachers.

•Use the content of workshops themselves and issues that emerge from training to illustrate ways of developing curriculum.

•Keep it simple; don't overwhelm Interns with too much new material or information. Don't plan too many activities. Allow time for the unexpected.

•Let go of the plan mid-stream if it isn't working; talk about why you're making this decision. Don't get stuck on the agenda.

•Bring in something external for people to react to: videos, outside speakers, skits; allow time for participants to evaluate them critically.

•Don't count on participants doing their homework (eg. coming prepared with examples of their practice, doing readings or trying suggested activities in their classes).

•Combine practical, hands-on techniques and activities with theory and reflection; combine the presentation of new information with interaction around participants' experiences and ideas. *Elicit* rather than just *transmitting.*

•Make the workshop active and experiential, modeling activities, not just describing them. Be concrete. Don't present abstract concepts in isolation: give examples that you can see, touch, feel, interact with. Show, don't tell.

•Structure ways for Interns to learn from each other and validate the knowledge they've gained from practice; don't leave all the presenting in the hands of a few 'trainers.' Allow plenty of time for discussion and sharing between sites.

- Invite Interns to explore various aspects of a debate in the field (eg., whether to correct while doing language experience stories) rather than presenting only the 'correct' side of the debate; present the debate itself.

- Make it clear that you're presenting options and alternatives, not prescriptions - that you're sharing, not telling people what to do; ask Interns if there's anything they might like to try. Invite them to experiment and investigate.

- Resist the temptation to be problem-solvers. Give Interns tools for trying to resolve their own problems rather than trying to solve them for Interns.

- Allow time for participants to figure things out for themselves; don't jump in to provide answers if they're struggling.

- Include space for people to talk about their fears and failures; don't focus just on successes and models of 'good' practice. Reinforce the notion of learning through mistakes - that everyone has times when things flop.

- Talk about the process and reflect on what's happening as you go; if something turns out to be inappropriate, discuss why and the parallels with what happens in class.

- Explain things in clear, understandable language; avoid jargon or academic terms.

- Gradually increase Interns' roles and responsibilities in conducting the workshops.

- Situate what you're doing in a broader context; talk about what others are doing in various parts of the country or the world so that Interns get a sense of how their work fits into a bigger picture.

- Build in time for evaluation both at the workshop and at the sites.

- Include action planning as a regular part of workshops; follow-up on workshop ideas at the sites with discussion of ideas/activities and planning for implementation.

Chapter Four: From Training to Teaching

Since this project focused primarily on training rather than teaching, we did much less documentation of what actually went on in the classes than on what happened in the workshops. Most of the information about the Interns' and Mentors' practice comes from what they reported in the workshops. This chapter looks at the overall approach to teaching that informed the training, the relationship between what happened in the workshops and the classes, some examples of specific tools and themes explored in the classes, and some recurring teaching issues.

What was the approach to teaching?

guiding principles

One of the central aspects of a participatory approach to adult literacy instruction is that teaching is context-specific: curriculum content arises from the needs and interests of each group of participating learners as much as possible. Since the language of instruction, learner populations, and community contexts differed at each project site, what happened in the classes varied as well. Thus, although there were some common underlying principles that guided the teaching, the ways that these principles were applied varied from class to class, teacher to teacher, and site to site. The guiding principles for teaching were explored in the section on the project rationale. Briefly, they include the following:

- *Start with learners' needs and interests.*
- *Involve learners in determining the content of instruction.*
- *Focus on meaning, not mechanics.*
- *Contextualize work on form (connect form to function and meaning).*
- *Center instruction around themes drawn from learners' social reality.*
- *Encourage dialogue and critical analysis of social realities.*
- *Use a variety of participatory tools to explore themes.*
- *Move toward action outside the classroom.*
- *Involve students in evaluation.*

As we said in the last chapter, the sequence of training workshops paralleled the participatory curriculum development process, moving from finding out about students' histories, needs, and goals, to exploring their social realities and concerns, to developing language and literacy through the use of participatory tools, to generating strategies for addressing problems collectively, to evaluating learning with them.

What was the relationship between training and teaching?

Having said all this, we now have to admit that all of these principles and processes for participatory curriculum development really did not correspond in any one-to-one way with what actually happened in classes. There was great variation in terms of the activities that Interns did, in terms of the ways which they combined mechanical and meaningful work, and in terms of their stance toward learners. There was also a considerable amount of change among individual Interns from the beginning to the end of the project: some Interns who adhered strictly to a mechanical approach early on began to incorporate more meaningful activities as they proceeded. Interns increasingly took risks in terms of addressing social issues with their students; they became more and more creative and confident about introducing their own ideas - ideas that had never been discussed in workshops (these Intern changes are discussed in Chapter 5). Thus, to imply that there was a single, uniform process of curriculum development based on these guiding principles would be misleading.

Similarly, although each workshop focused on a particular aspect of curriculum development and incorporated specific tools for classroom application, there was often no direct relationship between what we did in the workshops and what the Interns did in their classes. Early on in the training cycle, when we asked Interns to report back on what had happened in their classes between workshops, we noticed that often what they reported had nothing to do with what we had done in the training: they may not have tried any of the activities we had suggested in the workshop. At first, as Coordinator, I was concerned about this, wondering if this meant that the training was ineffective, not meeting participants' needs, or somehow irrelevant. However, the Mentors were less concerned - they saw it as natural and inevitable.

"The transition has to be gradual..."

•Felipe said that even if Interns don't use what is presented immediately, they may use it in the future. When they use it depends on the context of the class. In his case, for example, the beginning students had strong expectations about learning - they were not used to a participatory approach and he felt that the teachers could not bombard them with innovative activities until they were more comfortable; the transition from expectations of a traditional, more mechanical approach to a participatory approach had to be gradual.

"We can't expect them to follow our plan..."

- Ana said that each group adapts what is presented in the training to their own particular situations: what Interns get from the workshops varies according to what they are ready for and they will use it as the site needs dictate it. As the trainers, we can't expect that each class will follow our plan.

"The time will come..."

- Julio said that we need to think of workshop activities as tools that can be used on an appropriate occasion: "I don't expect to go to class and make a photocopy of it." He said, "I never ask: did you use what we did at the workshop? The time will come." Part of the reason for this stance is that some of the Interns look to him as the expert, expecting him to tell them exactly how to teach. If he gives in to this expectation, the Interns won't develop their own creativity. Thus, he feels it is important not to pressure Interns to follow up on the workshop. He also noted that they had already used some of the ideas that we presented in the workshop *before* the workshop.

Looking back, there seemed to be several general patterns to how Interns connected the training and teaching:

- ***resisting exploration of workshop activities in their classes:*** For a period of time at the beginning of the project, a few Interns at one site seemed to completely ignore what we were doing in workshops in their classes, using a mechanical, decontextualized, skills-oriented approach to their teaching. They spent a great deal of time working on syllables and words with no connection to themes or even vocabulary related to students' lives. In this case, the Mentor designed a self-evaluation activity for the Interns in order to prompt more reflective consideration of the connection between workshops and teaching. Shortly thereafter, the Interns began to draw material from students' lives, using pictures, stories, and contextualized texts.

- ***attempting to directly apply what we demonstrated in the workshops to their teaching:*** Sometimes Interns would introduce an activity but because they did not fully understand it, or feel comfortable with it themselves, it would lead to frustration. For example, after a session about making space for students to explore loaded social issues, an Intern elicited a heated discussion about jails, but when he felt at a loss about how to follow up on it, he suddenly cut off the discussion to 'get back to work.'

- ***adapting workshop tools to their own contexts:*** Many of the Interns were very creative in modifying an activity which we had demonstrated to fit what was already going on in their classes. For example, after our session on doing group profiles (in which we interviewed each other in pairs and then wrote the composite group information onto a chart), one Intern adapted the activity by incorporating a specific grammar focus (used to) for her ESL students. Another Intern who was working on writing with Spanish literacy students, had his students write their own information on small pieces of paper which they later stuck onto a large cardboard chart with blank spaces on it.

•*choosing not to use the tools:* In some cases, Interns made conscious choices not to do certain activities that we had demonstrated because they felt they were inappropriate. For example, one Intern decided not to use the group profile chart because his students had worked together for a considerable period of time and already knew each other; he felt that it would be artificial to do the profile under those conditions. In other cases, the Interns didn't try an activity or tool that had been suggested in the workshop because they were involved in some other unit, and to try the activity would have been an interruption of what was already in motion. Classes had a momentum of their own which they did not want to derail for the sake of training needs.

•*being creative in ways that went beyond what we did in workshops:* At times, Interns' choices to introduce activities unrelated to what we had done in workshops indicated that they had attained a new level of self-confidence and independence. For example, one Intern, who had started out feeling a strong need to be told what to do at every step, got to the point where she requested to be left alone to create her own curriculum. At the Harborside, the teachers worked with students on creating a video to use in recruiting new students. Often interns introduced their own ideas and brought them to the workshops to share with others, who, in turn, tried them in their own classes (eg. JMCS Interns did a health-related unit which inspired HCS Interns to do one too).

In summary, we learned that the fact that Interns didn't always apply workshop tools directly in their teaching wasn't necessarily a sign of the workshop's failure or the Interns' inadequacy. Instead, it was often a positive sign - a sign that they were being sensitive to the dynamics of their classrooms and developing a critical capacity to see what was or was not relevant for a particular group at a particular time. What was important was the Interns' application of participatory principles, a process which developed unevenly over time, rather than the linear application of a particular tool or activity from each session to a subsequent class.

How did the context of students' lives shape teaching?

Teaching was shaped not just by what we did in the workshops and Interns' development, but by what was happening in the students' lives and in the life of their communities. Because a participatory approach is responsive to the social context, these factors were particularly important in shaping teaching.

Since the essence of a participatory approach to literacy/ESL education is allowing the issues and concerns that preoccupy students to become the motor force of instruction, the starting point for curriculum development has to be an understanding of students' lives - their backgrounds, personal histories, strengths, and current situations. In many adult ESL programs, students are interviewed during in-take and composite profiles of the student populations are constructed for assessment and placement purposes. However, once students enter the classroom, these profiles, which include general information about years of schooling, occupational status, reasons for immigration, etc., may be ignored in the push to work on competencies or survival skills for the new life in the U.S. Our experience is that each of these aspects of students' lives has real consequences for what happens in the classroom, and, further, that these general profiles only tell the beginning of the story. There are powerful stories behind student profiles which affect learning and participation, stories which can only be uncovered through classroom interaction. Thus, the starting point for participatory curriculum development must be learning about the students, and understanding the contextual factors in their lives which shape their literacy acquisition.

job situations

In terms of the general profiles of the students in our project, as we said in Chapter 2, there was a great deal of variation both within and among sites. The differences in students' situations at different sites had direct implications for the development of the curriculum: for example, while at the HMSC some classes focused on strategies for looking for work (because unemployment was so high), classes at the JMCS and Harborside, where more students are working (but in marginalized jobs), focused on workplace rights and discrimination on the job.

The fact that so many of the literacy students at the HMSC were unemployed had very real consequences for both the atmosphere and the content of classes. On a very practical level, it meant that students sometimes had to miss classes because they didn't have the bus fare. At one point in the spring, enrollment fell drastically because many of the students had to leave to work in the fields. This disrupted the continuity of classes and was sad for the students (because they wanted to continue studying, but these were the only jobs they could get).

In addition, unemployment meant that students were often preoccupied with worries about how they would be able to survive, which, in turn, affected their ability to concentrate. As one student said, "I could learn more, but because I have a lot of problems, my mind is not here." This presented a dilemma and a challenge for teachers: while they wanted to help students address this problem, the reality is that, during a time of recession, prospects for Haitians with few English or literacy skills are bleak. Julio responded to this situation in one of his classes by inviting a job counselor to talk about the process of finding a job in the U.S., as well as by talking about the whole economic situation in the U.S. Most importantly, teachers gave students space to talk about their concerns and linked them to literacy teaching. Students talked about coming to class so they wouldn't have to stay home and think about their problems by themselves: they have nothing at home, no TV, no music; as one of them said, "My house is like a jail." In one class, they wrote about these concerns in their dialogue journals. Many said that the class was the only place they could really talk about their problems.

immigration status

Issues relating to immigration status and regulations also affected teaching. At Harborside, many of the students had been granted temporary residence under special INS provisions for Salvadoran refugees. There, too, enrollment dropped suddenly at one point when students heard that the INS had changed the date that their temporary residence permits would expire; many left because students decided to get as much work as they could (part-time jobs in addition to their regular jobs) before they were deported. Recruitment was also effected, since potential students chose to try to find work rather than go to school. In addition, some students had to leave the country for extended periods in order to comply with INS regulations or to tend to family business. Because students were often separated from their families for either economic or bureaucratic reasons, learning to write letters to family members became an important focus of classwork.

political situation in home country

Another factor which shaped student participation in classes was the political situation in their home countries. Thus, for example, because students from Central America had often been directly affected by war or other aspects of political repression, discussion of their past lives had to be handled with great sensitivity. Some of the participants in the first group of students at Harborside had previously enrolled in another literacy program but left it because the methodology focused heavily on direct discussion of the political situations in their countries; they were upset when the teacher introduced these topics as the primary vehicle for literacy development. Yet, in the Harborside classes, when they themselves had more control over selection of the curriculum content, they sometimes introduced these issues themselves. Understanding the complexity of students' responses to their backgrounds was key in knowing when and how to talk about issues of immigration.

Likewise, the changing political situation in Haiti had an enormous and pervasive influence on both the content and atmosphere of classes at the HMSC. For example, at the time of Aristide's campaign and election, there was a great deal of energetic class discussion about various political perspectives, the history of Haiti, the processes of political change (and especially the role of literacy in this process) in many of the classes. Even day-to-day events in Haiti became the focus of classwork: once, when a political meeting about preventing violence was interrupted by gunfire and assassinations in Port-au-Prince, the students generated a language experience story about this event which became the focus of a week-long unit.

Of course, the coup against Aristide affected both the mood and the content of classes. The first step for teachers was to figure out how to go on despite the overwhelming desolation and anger that they and their students felt. As teachers said in a teacher-sharing meeting, there was no way to proceed without dealing with students' feelings about what had happened. Teachers responded in a variety of different ways. One teacher linked the coup to a discussion about the importance of education (the role of education in building a new Haiti) and this became a way to get students motivated to get back to literacy work. In another class, the teacher linked the current situation to the history of Haiti, the assassination of Dessalines, and then brought in proverbs that represented the situation in Haiti; these proverbs became the basis for some literacy work which, as the teacher said, began to 'renormalize' the class. A third teacher invited students to express their feelings about the coup in English; they started by writing an English account of the story and then generated their own wh- questions (What happened? How did it happen? Who is responsible? When did it happen? Where is Aristide now? Why did it happen? etc.) The teacher then brought in an English newspaper article which the class read and answered *wh-* questions about. He went on to relate the current situation to Haitian history, including important dates and events relating to Haitian independence. By the time of the CTAFL project, students were so demoralized by the repression and seeming hopelessness of the situation that they did not want to discuss it in class.

violence

The issues of violence and neighborhood safety also shaped teaching. Students often talked about being afraid to come to class at night; evening classes got smaller as it got dark earlier. They told about having their purses snatched or their apartments broken into, and there were periodic fluctuations in attendance corresponding to particular incidents of crime in the neighborhood. In many cases, this issue was incorporated into lesson content: students talked or wrote about their experiences and fears as well as generating strategies for addressing them (carpooling, walking in groups, etc.). One of the classes, for example, wrote a language experience story about a student who was robbed; they then wrote about an attack that had taken place in Haiti; finally, they analyzed the differences between violence in Boston and that in Haiti, concluding that the former was economic while the latter was political.

men's and women's roles

At one site, an entire class was composed of men (except for one woman). In the community of that class, it was common for men to go out to work, socialize, or attend school while the women stayed home with the children. At times, men specifically forbade their wives to come to school. This dynamic had an effect on the issues that arose in class and on the nature of discussions. It came up as an issue for dialogue as the class talked about how to recruit more students. As students discussed what keeps people from enrolling, the question of why women need to stay home but men don't was explored.

funding

The unstable nature of funding for adult education in general and native language literacy in particular influenced teaching both affectively and substantively. Students, Interns and Mentors were demoralized by the fact that there was so much uncertainty about whether classes would be able to continue. At the HCS, this contextual factor was integrated into the curriculum as students decided to form a committee to raise money once the end of the National Institute for Literacy funding was in sight. They instituted weekly meetings, elected officers, and developed a range of strategies for addressing the problem.

The very power of these contextual factors in students' lives means that they have to be taken into account in teaching. While traditionally problems caused by unemployment, immigration, or family concerns might be dealt with primarily through structures external to the instructional process (by counseling, attendance regulations, legal assistance, etc.), in a participatory approach, issues that preoccupy students are central to the content of instruction itself (although, of course, support services are also important). Since students' real issues and concerns vary from group to group, teachers cannot rely on traditional textbooks, with a predetermined, form-focused sequence of lessons, as the mainstay of the curriculum (although certainly there is a place for using published materials). This section talks about how teachers in a participatory approach move from the context of students' lives to curriculum content. It looks at the tools and activities teachers in our project used in place of a set curriculum or textbook.

uncovering themes

The first step of developing a participatory classroom is learning about students. Often, however, students only share their concerns, needs and preoccupations once a basis of trust has been built. As such, part of the art of teaching is creating an atmosphere where students feel comfortable about sharing their stories. Paradoxically, many students feel most comfortable at first in a traditional classroom where teaching is rote and decontextualized (focusing on vocabulary lists, grammar, textbook exercises, etc.). Thus, while some of the Interns initially thought that the way to find students' needs was just to ask them what they wanted to do, whenever they asked this question, the response was, "You're the teacher, you're supposed to tell us what to do." They quickly discovered that finding compelling issues in students' lives entails more than just asking students for their input: it entails moving gradually from the traditional model that learners may expect to a more participatory one, consciously listening for opportunities to build on issues of importance to students, as well as creating a structured framework for eliciting these issues. The following excerpt from the minutes of a staff meeting describes how Felipe addressed this dilemma with a beginning Spanish literacy class:

> ***The transition to a participatory approach has not been easy because the students are used to a 'ma-me-mi-mo-mu' approach and don't feel that they can learn unless they are using a book. This week, Felipe brought a paper with drawings of family members for the beginning class. At first***

they didn't want to work on it, saying, "What are we going to do with these pictures?" Felipe said, "let's try it and then we'll see if you learned from it." They first read the words under the pictures and then Felipe used them to introduce new letters and show them how to make words. Next, he then gave them some pictures with blanks under them and asked them to write the words for family members. They then wrote the names of their own brothers and sisters, etc. They were excited when they saw their family members' names in writing. Next, they plan to write stories about their families.

conscious listening

One way that teachers and interns were able to find students' issues was through **conscious listening.** This process entails being tuned in to classroom dynamics and 'off-the-record' spontaneous conversations that occur before, during, or after class. Teachers would often walk in on heated discussions of events in the news, in students' personal lives or in the community as class was starting; alternatively, a debate might erupt unexpectedly during the course of a lesson. In some cases, teachers would follow-up on these issues immediately (by incorporating the discussion into the lesson - pulling out key words or developing a language experience story); in other cases, the teacher would think about the issue, discuss how to handle it and develop a lesson related to it for a subsequent class.

In one class, a student who had been absent came in talking excitedly because he had seen his ex-wife with another man, had hit the man's car, and then they had argued and fought. This prompted a class discussion in which others talked about quarrels they had had and their experiences with the court system. They discussed ways of resolving conflicts that didn't involve violence and would not end up in court.

However, it is not enough to rely on conscious listening as the main way to find student issues. First, it is hard to predict when issues will arise spontaneously; especially at the beginning of a cycle, before students are comfortable bringing their experiences and concerns into class, the times that issues emerge in this way may be few and far between. Further, learning how to 'hear' these issues and then utilize them is a skill which develops over time. Even when students' concerns have surfaced, students may not feel that discussing them is 'real' school work: no matter how compelling a discussion may be, students may see it as a diversion from what they are 'supposed' to be doing (worksheets, dictations, etc.).

tools

Thus, a central way to legitimate an issue-centered approach involves introducing structured activities (or tools) which draw out dialogue while at the same time developing literacy and language. Deborah Barndt, a Canadian popular educator, has suggested the notion of a **tool kit** of resources that teachers can draw from to elicit or develop themes (see Barndt, 1986). For her, tools are concrete ways of representing an issue (photos, drawings, socio-drama, etc.), designed to generate active responses, dialogue and language/literacy work. We extended the term to refer to any artifact or activity which triggered student participation through a structured process with an open format. These structured activities serve two important functions: they provide a format for uncovering issues, and they serve to legitimize discussions which might otherwise seem to be diversions. By linking loaded thematically-based content with structured literacy work, they provide a concrete format to focus dialogue so that it counts as "real work" in students' eyes. The following list includes tools that were utilized in both the BCLTP and the CTAFL at various points:

- *Charts*
- *Pictures and photos*
- *Key words*
- *Language experience stories (LEA)*
- *Published materials*
- *Codes*
- *Role plays*
- *Student-generated writing*
- *Photostories*

In practice, a combination of different tools was usually used to explore any given theme. Thus, for example, a class may have started with a discussion prompted by conscious listening on the teacher's part; they may have then pulled out key words, developed a language experience story, read a related published text, and written about the topic in journals. In addition, participatory tools were often integrated with traditional activities - grammar exercises in the ESL classes, handwriting or spelling work in the literacy classes. Further, many of the students requested math work and this was incorporated on a regular weekly basis in many of the classes. Finally, in the L1 literacy classes, as students became more confident with their first language reading and writing, they also requested some ESL instruction.

Charts

Charts are useful because they provide a structure into which students can insert content from their own lives and experiences. They were used in a variety of ways in our project: to gather information about students' life histories, to compare cultural practices among different groups, to identify places where students used English or L1 literacy, and to elicit students' goals. The basic process in using charts is:

- chose categories or questions as the focus (students can participate this)
- elicit information from each other regarding the questions (through peer/teacher questioning in pairs, small groups or whole group work)
- write the information for each individual on the chart
- follow up with both form- and content-focused work.

Follow-up work focusing on form might utilize the information in the chart to develop sentences, practice grammar or do reading/writing exercises. Content work might compare students' information, look for patterns, discuss their causes, and plan future work based on the information. The following excerpts from workshop minutes describe how several Interns used charts with their classes:

- In one of the ESL classes, an Intern divided the class in three groups (each of which had one fluent English writer in the group) and gave them a set of questions about their life histories. The groups discussed the questions and then interviewed each other in pairs within the groups. They then shared the information they had discussed and the fluent English writer wrote it on a chart. For follow up, the class worked on the past tense (used to forms). They discussed similarities and differences between their jobs in the U.S. and at home. The Intern then made a story from the chart and gave students copies of the stories with follow-up exercises.

- In one of the Spanish literacy classes, the Intern made a chart asking about: name, country, arrival date, important family members, persons affected by students' learning, and what you miss most from your country, jobs and home. He had students write their answers on small pieces of paper; then students stuck their pieces of paper onto a large piece of cardboard with the blank chart on it. They then took turns reading each others' answers off the chart. For follow-up, they made games from the charts, and discussed jobs in each country.

- One Intern developed a chart about Valentine's Day with questions like: Do you have a holiday like Valentine's Day in your country? How do you celebrate it? Who is your valentine?

Pictures and photos

Unlike traditional visual aids, the function of pictures or photos in a participatory classroom is to uncover themes or to evoke powerful responses. As such, the pictures themselves should represent a loaded, easily recognizable issue or dilemma from students' lives. Use of the picture should start with very concrete questions about what students see in the picture and move on to experiences and issues evoked by the picture. Once again, this tool can trigger dialogue which, in turn, may lead to a range of literacy activities - language experience stories, student writing and reading, as well as vocabulary and conversation development in ESL classes. The following excerpts from workshop minutes describe several variations on the use of pictures in our project:

•*Teacher-drawn pictures:* Felipe drew a picture of a farm/country scene because most of the students in his beginning class are from the countryside and he wanted to get ideas about their pasts and interests. He gave the picture to students face down and then asked them to talk about what they first noticed when they turned the page over. They liked the picture; some said it reminded them of their homes. After they discussed the picture, they wrote about it. They wrote their stories on the board, made some revisions and did some corrections. They asked Felipe to type their stories. These students often say that they can't write, but they wrote a lot in this activity. The most beginning student wrote the most.

•*Student-drawn pictures:* Ana gave students newsprint and asked them to sit in pairs and draw a picture together without talking. Afterwards, they sat in small groups and discussed questions: How did you feel while doing this? How did you come up with the picture and how did you agree on what to draw without using words? Everyone was involved and talked about how it felt to have to communicate without words, mentioning issues like the confusion that you feel when you're on a train and have to ask directions. This activity led to the identification of places where students need English.

•*Photos:* The BCLTP Mentor at Harborside brought in a picture of a shovel (representing the key word *pala* in Spanish). While he thought he might get a response, he didn't imagine it would be so strong: students talked for at least 45 minutes about the uses of shovels in their lives, telling stories about being forced by the police to bury people in their villages in El Salvador. They went on to discuss using shovels in the fields, crops, the various agricultural methods they used in their countries, etc. As they spoke, he wrote down what they were saying, including other key words which became the focus of subsequent lessons.

Key words

Key words provide a bridge between dialogue and decoding activities for literacy and ESL classes. They are chosen for their powerful meaning in students' lives (representing some important concept or issue for them) as well as for their structural features. Once the significance of the words and issues they represent has been explored, the words themselves become a way to link the discussion to further literacy activities. They can be broken into syllables, used to generate new words or used as vocabulary for follow-up language experience stories, dialogue journal writing, etc.. Teachers can elicit key words in the students' first language as a bridge to English. The following excerpts from workshop minutes describe some of the ways key words were used in our project:

- *teacher-selected key words:* In this case the teacher introduces a key word based on his/her own knowledge of what may be important to students. A concept which has been introduced by a key word can be elaborated by a clustering exercise in which students free-associate the word with other words/ideas it brings to mind (the teacher may ask "What does this word make you think of? How have you experienced this?"); they may go on to explore the commonalities among people's experiences, their social causes, etc. Interns at the JMCS introduced the word "food" in a beginning ESL class. In small groups, students discussed food in different countries, cheap and expensive food, and why there is so much food in the U.S. but so little in other countries.

- *key words emerging from student dialogue:* In this case, the teacher pulls key words out of a discussion that has been triggered through some other means (a picture, a news story, etc.) or asks students to select them. For example, after viewing a video about the inauguration of Aristide in Haiti, a beginning ESL class discussed the video, first in terms of what they had seen and then in terms of how it related to their lives. The teacher wrote what the students were saying as they spoke. The teacher then asked them to find five words that they "liked best" in the story. They chose: *president, money, freedom, Tonton Macoute* and *peace*. They proceeded to write stories based on the words.

- *as follow-up on a reading:* Key words can be selected from a reading to generate further dialogue and writing. After identifying problems with employers as an issue at Harborside, the Mentor introduced a reading about workplace rights. Once the group had read the text together, he put the key word *discriminación* on the board as a way to facilitate discussion of the text and elicit students' own experiences. The group then did a clustering exercise to elaborate the concept and went on to write about particular problems at work and strategies for addressing them.

Language experience stories (LEA)

One of the most effective tools for connecting dialogue and literacy work is the Language Experience Approach (LEA), in which the teacher acts as a scribe while students dictate whatever they want to have written. When Interns were first introduced to the participatory approach, they often were quite successful in engaging the class in dialogue of current events or critical issues in their lives. However, there was sometimes a gap between discussions and literacy activities, which focused on decoding and mechanical skills work. The LEA provided a concrete bridge from discussions to reading and writing activities. The following are some of the ways LEA was used in our project:

- ***to follow-up a class discussion of a heated topic:*** Thus, for example, if students were talking about the Gulf war, the teacher might ask, "What would you like to write about the war?" The students would then dictate a story which the teacher wrote on the board. This, in turn, might be followed by a range of literacy activities (selecting key words, working on corrections or a particular grammar point, generating student writing about the topic, etc.). Alternatively, the teacher might take notes while discussion was in progress and type the story for further work and reflection in later classes.

- ***to tell the story of a picture:*** Teachers often started by introducing a picture and asking some concrete questions about it. They then facilitated dialogue about issues that were implicit in students' responses. The challenge at this point is to get beyond a physical description of the picture. At the HMSC, one class used a Polaroid camera to take their own pictures. The task was to take a picture of "something important in the lives of Haitians in Boston." Thus, their photos became a way of both identifying important themes for the students and generating LEA stories. Questions used to start the process included: *What does this picture make you think of? What does it mean to you? Why is it important for Haitians in Boston?* As students talked, the teacher wrote key words on the board. Then students responded to the question, *What do you want to write about this picture?* Each student contributed one sentence to the story. The teacher read the story to the group; the group read it together; individuals read sentences with others' support. The story was typed with follow-up questions and key word exercises (grouping key words into patterns, etc.) and followed by more group and individual reading.

An important debate in the LEA process centers around the issue of corrections: should teachers write exactly what students say (even if it is not grammatical) or correct it? Many Interns felt uncomfortable writing anything that was not correct. This question (and the way we handled it) is discussed in the section on Teaching Issues (below).

Published materials

Students want books - books make them feel that their learning is 'real.' They provide a sense of security and continuity. In addition, teachers often don't have the time or the experience to continuously generate their own materials; they want the structure that a textbook provides (even if they don't rely on it exclusively).

However, there are a number of problems relating to materials. The first, of course, for native language literacy classes, is that few textbooks are available, and those that do exist are often not suitable for literacy acquisition in the U.S., for adults, and/or for a participatory approach to literacy instruction. Most adult literacy texts for Haitian Creole or Spanish were developed for literacy campaigns in Haiti or Mexico, and, as such, use key words and concepts that relate to realities which are not always relevant for immigrants or refugees in the U.S. Other L1 literacy books may be written for children and have content or pictures which are patronizing and irrelevant for adult learners. Many of those written in North America are based on Puerto Rican or Mexican culture and vocabulary which is unfamiliar to Central American students. Many focus on mechanical approaches to literacy. Even texts which aim to promote a participatory approach may have such an explicitly political agenda that students are put off by them.

Even for beginning ESL, where there is an abundance of commercial texts, finding a single, appropriate text was problematic, again because the texts may be patronizing, mechanical, and not geared toward a participatory, learner-centered approach. Of course, many experienced teachers reject the notion of relying on a single text anyway: they say that, by definition, no text can meet the evolving needs of students and texts should be seen as resources rather than backbones of the curriculum.

In our project, published materials were generally used to support the development of a theme (rather than as lessons in themselves). Issues relating to materials were addressed in several ways:

- ***Using published literacy texts:*** Texts which had been developed for other contexts were used with adaptations for the U.S.; dialogue was framed in terms of how an issue related to students' lives here (with questions like, "How do you experience this problem in Boston?"). Interns and Mentors frequently asked family members in their home countries to bring back materials which could be used in L1 literacy classes.

- ***Using authentic materials:*** Newspaper articles, cartoons, and leaflets were used as texts. Ana regularly asked students to bring in news articles that they wanted to read and discuss; one brought in an article about the English Only controversy in Dade County.

•*Using published student writing:* Among the most powerful published materials that interns used were texts written by literacy and ESL students. Some of these had been published elsewhere (eg. Voices, a magazine of student writings from Invergarry, British Columbia, and I Told Myself I am Going to Learn, by Elizabeth Ndaba, a photo-story about a South African woman's struggles with her husband as she decides to go back to school). These materials are glossy and beautiful (satisfying students' desire for 'real' texts) as well as powerful and relevant in terms of content. In addition, classes used locally published magazines, such as Need I Say More, a journal of Boston-area literacy students' writings, and magazines published at their own sites.

•*Adapting ESL materials for L1 use:* Native language literacy teachers often used ESL texts to get graphics and ideas for exercises. For example, ESL materials on body parts were used in the Spanish literacy units on health.

•*Generating L1 materials for the U.S. context:* The Mentor and Interns at the HMSC used some of their teacher-sharing time to develop Creole literacy materials for the U.S. context. Most of these were readings with thematic content, followed by questions about the text as well as opinion questions.

•*Using children's literature:* Unlike literacy texts (basals) written for children, real literature often has beautiful illustrations and compelling stories which may have relevance for adults. Participants used some of these books with the Spanish literacy classes.

•*Using culturally familiar genre (proverbs, riddles, songs):* Because of their own familiarity with the cultures of the learners, teachers and interns were able to integrate both forms and processes that were culturally congruent for learners into instruction. For example, during the BCLTP, the Mentor and Interns at the HMSC developed a Creole proverb book based on one that had been started by a group of teachers at another Creole literacy program several years earlier. At the JMCS, Ana often used slogans to elicit discussion. For example, she introduced the Spanish slogan, "El pueblo unido jamas sera vencido" and invited the Spanish-speaking students to explain its significance to the others; then she asked people from other language groups if they had slogans in their countries and, if so, to share them with the class.

Codes

Another tool used to explore themes from students' social reality is a code; this term was from Freire's concept of codification by Nina Wallerstein (1983). In this case, the teacher selects or creates materials which represent a problem or dilemma facing students. Rather than suggesting solutions to the problem for students or referring them to an outside support service/expert, the teacher poses the problem back to the group in the form of a picture or a short dialogue. This re-presentation of the problem depersonalizes it (framing it in a somewhat abstract way so that it doesn't refer to the specific dilemma, but captures its various aspects); in this way, learners can get some distance on the issue and generalize about a specific problem.

Once reactions have been triggered by the code, the teacher guides students through a structured five step dialogue process in which they:

- **Describe what they see in the code:** Who is talking? What is happening?
- **Identify the problem represented by the code:** What is the problem here?
- **Relate the problem to their own experience:** Do you know anyone who has been in a similar situation? How have you experienced this problem?
- **Discuss the root causes of the problem:** How has this problem come to be? What is happening in the broader society that causes this problem?
- **Share strategies for addressing the problem:** What have you done in a similar situation? What can we do about this problem? In this final stage, collective action is stressed over individual action since this is often more effective and reinforces collaboration.

Teachers in our project used problem-posing codes to address a wide range of themes they had identified as significant for students:

- issues of classroom dynamics (eg. how to deal with a student who talked too much, how much ESL the literacy classes should do each week; whether students should use their first language in ESL classes; what to do with hot topics like religion or politics when they come up in class)

- family issues (men expecting women to stay home and watch the children while they go to school or socialize; kids acting as interpreters for parents; difficult health issues like cancer, birth control, and AIDS)

- workplace issues (discrimination at work, finding work)

- community issues (dealing with the legal system, immigration, day care)

Role plays and theater techniques

Some Interns used role play and theater techniques to explore themes while at the same time providing contexts for language development.

- An Intern at the JMCS planned a week of classes around the theme of work; however, after the first class, the lesson for the rest of the week developed from what had happened on Monday. The Intern started by bringing in a reading about a case involving discrimination in the workplace. The class worked on vocabulary from the case (*prejudice, benefits,* etc.). She used a picture of a store with a "Help Wanted" sign where a woman was telling someone, "No jobs." The class divided into three groups, discussed the picture and then developed role plays about similar situations that they had been in. The Intern had been worried that the lesson would be too difficult for beginning students, but they had all experienced similar situations and were eager to talk about them. She said, "I gave them the vocabulary and they went from that."

- After a theater workshop in the BCLTP, one Intern used theater techniques to motivate her students. She came to class one night and noticed that students seemed to be tired and without energy. She decided to do a warm-up activity to get them motivated. She started by explaining that the first activity would get them energized for work and asked them to stand in a circle and clap their hands with each other. After they had done this, she explained the purpose of the next activity, saying it is easier to have a dialogue by acting out the idea first. She then asked them to form two groups and choose a word which was meaningful to them. Each group acted out the word; the other group described each act afterwards and then guessed what the word was. One group chose the word *malad* (sick) and the other group chose the word *pov* (poor). After the acting, the students dictated a story about each word. She then typed up the stories and formulated some questions as a follow-up activity.

- At the HCC, Spanish literacy students developed their own skit for a video on literacy. The video was aired on public television to recruit new students to the program.

Student-generated writing

Despite the fact that many of the students in the literacy classes knew only a few letters and were not comfortable with the physical aspects of writing (holding a pencil, letter formation) when they began classes, most were able to do some independent, meaningful writing after about six months. Several factors seemed to support the development of their writing. The first was the **modeling** that took place in class through the group LEA process: students collectively went through a composing process, linking their ideas to written form with the support of the teacher and peers; they moved through various stages from this supported group writing to individual writing which, in turn, progressed from words to sentences to longer pieces. Second was the stress on **meaning over form**: students were encouraged to take risks, and teachers responded to their writing in terms of its content more than its surface features. Third, students were encouraged to write for real **communicative purposes**, for real audiences and about topics that were important to them. Fourth, they were immersed in contexts where **student writing was valued**: they read published pieces by other students, and saw peers working on writing and having it published in site magazines; they were included in this community of writers as their own writing sometimes was published.

Several formats or genres were utilized by different classes in the project to promote the development of writing:

- **dialogue journals:** Dialogue journals are a place where teachers and students can have a written conversation on a private, one-to-one basis. In theory, students write about whatever they want to (although, in our experience, they may need to go through some guided steps before they are comfortable initiating topics of their own); teachers write back to students just as they would to a peer, responding communicatively in terms of the meaning or content, rather than attending to form. Their responses model correct usage, but don't explicitly correct students' mistakes.

- **letters:** One of the main goals expressed by many students when they started classes was to be able to write letters to family and friends by themselves, without having to depend on others. At the HCC, this process started with students writing letters to another Spanish literacy class in NYC. Although the exchange itself was sustained only for a few months, it gave students the confidence to begin writing letters to their families and friends.

- **articles for publication in site magazines:** All three sites in the project published their own magazines of student writings. Being invited to write for the magazine turned out to be a strong motivation for literacy students. As they became more proficient, they moved from submitting LEA stories written by the whole class to individual pieces of increasingly greater length.

Photostories

A photostory is a story which is about a key issue or set of issues identified by learners, accompanied by photographs. Interns in the BCLTP were introduced to the idea of photostories through a workshop by an outside presenter. One Intern at the HMSC decided to follow up on the idea with her own class. They made a photostory about the life of a Haitian family in Boston using the following process:

1. **Picture plus analysis:** The Intern started by showing students a picture of a Haitian man looking pensive. She asked students to give their reactions to the picture: what did they see? They responded by saying they saw a man who is thinking and looking sad. Using a clustering format, she then asked why he might be sad and what he might be thinking. One student said he doesn't like the country where he lives. Others said he may have social problems: problems with the educational system or prejudice, no money, no food, no family; he may have sentimental problems like a wife who cheats or whom he doesn't trust. They then discussed the results of these problems, mentioning things like frustration, loss of confidence, humiliation, alcoholism and drug problems. They went on to discuss possible solutions: go to school, be open about his problems, seek advice, etc.

2. **Key words:** The Intern then pulled out some key words for syllable work and told the students that they would continue to discuss and write about the problems students had identified.

3. **Further exploration and writing about themes generated:** In subsequent classes (for about an hour each day), students discussed and wrote about various themes which had been identified in response to the picture: problems with their children's education, lack of respect and confidence, family problems, work. etc.

4. **Writing their own photostory:** Students then gave the man a name and connected his various problems into a story. As the Intern said, "The sad man came alive."

5. **Looking at a model of a photo-story:** The Intern brought in a South African photostory (I Told Myself I am Going to Learn by Elizabeth Ndaba) as an example of something that they could do with the story they had written.

6. **Taking pictures:** The students then assigned roles for the various characters and took pictures to go with each part of the story.

7. **Lay-out and copying:** The pictures were laid out with the story and copied.

8. **Revision**: There was some debate about the ending of the story; the students discussed the ending and revised it somewhat.

What themes did classes explore?

As Interns became more skilled in conscious listening and drawing out student themes, and students became more comfortable with the notion of centering learning around their concerns, a rich tapestry of themes and topics emerged. The following list gives a sense of the kinds of issues from the context of students' lives around which curriculum was developed in the BCLTP and the CTAFL.

educational issues	•why L1 literacy is important •students' prior educational experiences •issues of classroom dynamics: use of the L1 in ESL classes, students who talk too much, childcare (for learners' children) •funding for classes
personal histories	•reasons for immigrating •family situations •jobs in the home country vs. jobs in the U.S.
culture	•cultural phenomena (eg. mythical animals from Central American folklore) •cultural comparisons (food in various countries, medicines) •men's roles, women's roles •the significance of holidays in learners' lives/cultures (Mother's Day, Valentine's Day, Martin Luther King Day)
history and politics	•important events in Haitian, Salvadoran history •current events: the Gulf War, Aristide's election, the coup against him, children from Haiti being forced to work in the Dominican Republic, the political situation in Central America •English Only laws
community issues	•violence and safety: a Haitian cab driver being shot, a mugging •the court system; handling disputes without involving the legal system
housing	•homelessness; finding housing
employment	•workplace discrimination and other workplace problems •reasons for unemployment •strategies for finding jobs
health	•AIDS, nutrition, cancer, the reproductive system
family issues	•men's and women's roles; participation in schooling •domestic violence •family literacy: children as interpreters for parents

Teaching issues...

Many of the issues that Mentors and Interns encountered in working with students in the classroom were strikingly similar to the issues that arose in the training workshops: just as Interns had started by expecting a methods-oriented training, students started by expecting a mechanical approach to literacy and a grammar-based approach to ESL; just as we had to work with different needs and starting points among Interns, they had to work with a range of levels and needs among students; just as we had to balance planning with responsiveness, Interns had to find a similar balance in the classroom, and so on. This section summarizes the teaching issues touched on above and examines how they were addressed in our project.

"What are we going to do with these pictures?" Many of the initial issues centered around students' expectations of schooling and the transition to a participatory approach. Even if they hadn't been to school before, students often had an Internalized notion of education that was quite traditional: school means sitting in rows, having a text book, doing exercises from worksheets, speaking only when called on, listening and copying, taking tests, etc. Some Interns, as well, felt that until beginning literacy students had 'mastered' the basics of decoding (through a rote learning approach), they could not do meaningful work. Mentors addressed this by slowly demonstrating what could be learned by integrating mechanical and participatory approaches. For example, Felipe brought drawings of family members to class; students who were used to the "ma-me-mi-mo-mu" approach questioned what they could learn by using pictures at first; but as he showed them how to generate their own ideas as the basis for learning to write letters and words, they became excited.

"Where's the book?" As mentioned earlier, a key issue was the desire of both Interns and students for textbooks. However, most of those available, especially for L1 literacy, were not appropriate in terms of content or level: they were often geared toward a non-U.S. context, were too overtly political or too mechanical, too elementary or too advanced. Some L1 Interns tried to address this by using basals for children. Mentors and Interns developed a variety of other strategies to address the need for materials: at the HMSC, they met together to develop their own materials; as a whole group, we had two workshops focused on appropriate materials for adults; as they became more comfortable with the participatory approach and methods like LEA and dialogue journals, increasingly, Interns used learner-generated materials. Even so, both the Spanish and Creole literacy teachers continued to feel the need for good L1 texts.

"Why don't I have an American teacher?" Some students (especially ESL students) are disconcerted at first when they find that their teacher isn't a White North American native speaker of English. They may feel that they can learn better from someone whose grammar and pronunciation are 'perfect;' or, as Julio said, they may have internalized the view that a Black person's English isn't good enough. Interns and Mentors responded to this in a variety of ways: by inviting students to try the class with the option of changing if they didn't think they were learning, by inviting native speakers to class on a regular basis, by explicitly discussing variations in dialect and pronunciation, and by discussing when 'correct' pronunciation is and isn't important. When one student complained about not having an American teacher, his Intern sent him to the class of an American teacher (who was a volunteer). He came back the next day, saying "All that teacher knows is how to speak English." In another case, a Guatemalan Spanish literacy student didn't want Felipe as a teacher because he is Salvadoran. Felipe responded by saying, "Well, let's see if I can teach you;" they ended up being good friends. In virtually every case, students were comfortable with non-native speakers as teachers after only a short time.

"You're the teacher.... you're supposed to tell us what to do." Students often initially viewed the teacher as the authority who is supposed to transmit information, ask questions, correct students' errors, enforce discipline and have the answer to any question. This posed a challenge in terms of developing a student-centered curriculum. For example, students were initially uncomfortable with the idea of helping to select topics. They felt that a good teacher should know what to do without having to ask. As Interns developed more structured ways of eliciting themes and issues, students became more comfortable about contributing their ideas and experiences.

"What's the right answer?" A related issue concerns students' notions of what counts as 'real' knowledge. Often students didn't see their own knowledge or opinions as valid; they thought the teacher was the only one with the 'right' answers. This meant that initially many were uncomfortable with dialogue or helping each other. At times, tensions arose when students answered each other's questions or corrected one another: some felt that others were trying to show their superiority. In one class, when asked their views in a discussion, students went through a period when each one would repeat exactly what the first one had said. Some students were uncomfortable with the idea of disagreeing, or debating ideas; many had come from cultures and/or political contexts where they hadn't had experience with dialogue or where it may even be dangerous to disagree with an authority figure, to state one's true beliefs. One way that teachers addressed this was by stating explicitly that they didn't know all the answers and by talking about the participatory approach to teaching. Another way was to try to turn students' questions back to them or to the group as a whole, eliciting their own answers to each other's questions.

"Homeless people are lazy." Once Interns felt comfortable facilitating dialogues, they began to wonder whether they should give their own opinions or keep silent. For example, if students made statements that they strongly disagreed with (eg. that homeless people are lazy or that women who are abused deserve it), should they intervene? Some Mentors felt strongly that our responsibility as teachers is NOT to express our views because it will silence students. Others said that sometimes you have to participate as a person, not a teacher, and this means saying what you think. Ana said that the trick is to express your views without imposing them - you can be a facilitator and a person at the same time. One way of doing this is by asking questions which prompt people to think about their own statements or views.

"Let's stop talking and do our work." Another issue which arose once Interns became more comfortable eliciting discussion and integrating it into class time was that students didn't always see this as legitimate learning. In ESL classes, dialogue was seen as conversation practice, but in L1 literacy classes students sometimes felt that open-ended discussion was not 'real work.' It was seen as a diversion from the lesson, rather than part of the lesson. Interns, too, sometimes saw it as outside the curriculum and didn't always know how to link it to literacy acquisition (as was the case with the Intern who elicited a heated discussion by introducing a picture of a jail, but then abruptly stopped the discussion, saying it was time to get back to work). As Interns learned to connect discussion with more structured learning activities, students began to see it as legitimate.

"Let's get back to the lesson plan." A related dilemma was whether to stick to lessons plans or go with the flow when something interesting came up. The two extremes of this tension were having no plan (waiting for a lesson to emerge spontaneously) and sticking to a plan rigidly without allowing for the lesson to take its own direction. In order to insure coherence, some Interns decided to set a schedule for a whole week in advance; however, often whatever happened the first day caused them to revise the plan for subsequent days. Once Interns were familiar with a set of tools which could be drawn on in response to spontaneous dialogue, they were able to modify plans as needed.

"This class is too easy." The differences in levels, needs and wants within a given class may create tensions between students. In one of Ana's classes, the more advanced students wanted her to give a test to screen out lower level students; in Julio's advanced Creole literacy class, some students wanted transitional ESL every day while others wanted it once a week. Sometimes, the more advanced students did all the talking, leaving the others silenced. Strategies for addressing differing needs included: preparing separate activities for different groups, developing peer teaching activities, getting tutors, and doing whole group activities which incorporated a range of student strengths (some students speaking, others writing, etc.).

"I can't concentrate. I'm too distracted." Often students come to class pre-occupied with worries that seemed to block their participation. While some Interns initially tried to get students to leave their problems outside the classroom door (telling them to stop talking about things unrelated to the lesson), they became increasingly skilled at integrating these concerns into the lessons. They did this by asking questions like: *What makes it hard for you to come to class? What makes it hard for you to concentrate?* From these questions, they developed LEA stories, journals, etc. At times, the students' problems seemed so great that the Interns felt overwhelmed by them.

"We don't have Indians." When learning is centered on participants' experiences and social issues, tensions taking a variety of forms inevitably arise: there may be tensions based on historic differences between ethnic or nationality groups, differences in belief systems or even religious differences. This kind of tension arose in one of the Spanish literacy classes: while in Guatemala, there is a great deal of pride in Indian culture (with traditions and customs having been preserved), this is not the case in El Salvador where Indians have been more assimilated. So when the teacher began to talk about Indian word origins, some of these students were offended and tried to dissociate themselves, saying, "We don't have Indians in El Salvador." At the HMSC, there were sometimes tensions between students from different religious groups. These tensions were addressed in various ways: sometimes teachers tried to avoid them in class; sometimes, the class explored them from a historical perspective; sometimes, they were addressed through cultural sharing. Other tensions relate to classroom dynamics, as in the cases of students bringing their children to class or students who talk too much. While students initially expected the teachers to intervene to fix these problems, teachers moved toward taking a problem-posing stance, by presenting the problems back to the class so they could collectively generate ways to address them.

"It's embarrassing to talk about breasts." In some cases, the issues themselves were difficult to talk about because of cultural taboos. For example, as students began to talk about health care, the reproductive system, and breast cancer, the Interns found themselves having to explain vocabulary and concepts that were embarrassing in mixed gender classes. In many cases, they dealt with this by laughing and using humor to dispel tensions.

"If we wanted to learn about war, we would have stayed in El Salvador." An additional dilemma concerned how to connect literacy work with the social or political context of students' lives. Students often explicitly resisted political discussions when they were initiated by teachers; however, over and over, our experience was that they became very engaged when discussion of the same issues emerged spontaneously or in the context of language work. As Julio said, "It's important not to impose your views because students think they have to agree with you because you're the teacher." Further, once Interns came to understand how politics manifests itself in everyday life (rather than just through wars, elections, etc.), it was easier to integrate analysis into teaching.

How did we address teaching issues?

Just as the teaching issues themselves mirrored training issues, ways of addressing them paralleled ways of addressing training issues. Interns used many of the same processes with each other and with students to address teaching issues that we had used to resolve training issues. Through the following processes, Interns generally came to rely on their collective resources (rather than 'university experts') to address classroom issues, adopting a stance of inquiry, posing problems back to students, and negotiating solutions with them.

•***combining traditional and innovative approaches:*** The primary strategy for dealing with students' expectations for traditional activities, materials, and student-teacher roles, was to integrate the more traditional and mechanical format (grammar, workbook, dictation) with more participatory activities. Likewise, a key way of legitimating dialogue, learners' knowledge and critical thinking was to link discussion with structured literacy/ESL activities.

•***teacher-sharing and problem-posing with each other:*** The primary strategy Interns used when dealing with issues of classroom dynamics was to bring the issue back to their site-based group or to the workshop, drawing on each other's ideas and expertise to address problems. For example, when some Interns were having trouble figuring out how to follow up on a student's heated account of a personal problem, the group generated the following suggestions:

-Listen a while and then ask if other students can relate similar experiences.
-Write the story on the board, or key words from it.
-Ask for support/ideas from others about the problem.
-Change the lesson and come back to it the next day.
-Make a list of vocabulary from the discussion and use it the next day.
-Ask students to speak slowly and watch to see who is participating; shift the focus to the dynamics of the discussion.
-Change the subject but make sentences related to the topic the next day.
-Avoid giving your own opinion as a teacher; set rules for dialogue so students learn to respect others.
-Use the Language Experience Approach to record the discussion.

When the issue of whether or not to correct students in writing Language Experience stories arose, the group generated the following possible strategies:

- Write exactly what they say first and correct it at a later stage.
- Compliment students' language and then say, "In English (or in Boston), they say it this way...," or "That's good but it's better to say...."
- Repeat their exact words and then say, "Is that what you want to say?"
- Note errors silently, but don't correct them; then use that point in the next day's lesson.
- Invite students to help each other, come to the board together to make changes.

•*reflecting on ways of learning (metacognition):* Often when teachers tried a new activity, they would integrate discussion about why they were doing it and invite students to compare their own responses to more traditional vs. innovative activities. For example, when students asked to have their dialogue journals corrected, one Intern explained why she would not focus on errors and then told them she would note language areas that needed work for future lessons. This kind of ongoing evaluation and meta-talk about learning strategies helped to legitimate the new approaches.

•*problem-posing with learners:* Interns often chose to address problems of classroom dynamics by creating a problem-posing code about the issue as a framework for language/literacy work and as a way of involving learners in the resolution of the problem. For example, Interns at the JMCS developed a code about use of the native language in the ESL classroom. This approach of involving students in addressing classroom problems moved classes toward sharing responsibility for learning. Further, it reinforced the underlying principle of the project - drawing on the resources of the community to address community needs.

Chapter Five: Evaluation

Since the focus of this project was on training (rather than on delivering instructional services), the evaluation mainly examines its impact on Interns and Mentors . Of course, assessing their effectiveness as teachers entails to some extent looking at how much their students learned. However, since the project was not long enough to yield or document significant changes in the literacy/ESL acquisition of beginning literacy/ESL students, we did not assess the progress of each individual learner involved in project classes; we did, however, gather some data on general changes among groups of learners. Thus, this chapter looks at the impact of the project on Interns, Mentors, groups of learners, and participating sites.

What was our approach to evaluation?

the guiding principles

Although more has been written about the evaluation of adult literacy *instruction* than about the evaluation of adult literacy *teacher training*, we felt that many of the same principles apply. One of the guiding principles in literacy evaluation theory is that *evaluation processes and tools should be congruent with the instructional approach* (Lytle 1988). Since our approach to both instruction and training was a participatory one, emphasizing participant involvement, meaning-centered learning and the relationships between learning and the social context, an evaluation model focusing only on the acquisition of discrete, decontextualized skills (measured through tests or formal assessments) would be inappropriate.

When instruction itself is responsive to participants' needs, evaluation must look at how they use what they've learned in their everyday lives. Likewise, the evaluation of Interns and Mentors must look at how they use what they've learned in their practice. We wanted the participants themselves to be involved in assessing their own learning; in addition, we wanted to see how they developed over time and integrated what they learned in their daily interactions. We felt that measuring outcomes of the project only in quantitative terms would be misleading and intimidating for participants. For these reasons, this report stresses qualitative evaluation in order to capture the varied ways that the impact of the project manifested itself. It was guided by the following principles - principles that were originally formulated for assessing learner progress, but that apply equally to assessing teachers-in-training.

Participatory evaluation is*...

- ***contextualized, variable...*** It doesn't try to measure isolated decontextualized skills, but rather examines actual usages and practices. Assessment tasks have a purpose. The particular forms that assessment takes can vary accordingly.

- ***qualitative...*** It involves reflective description, attempting to capture the richness of learning, rather than reducing it to numbers. It looks at meta-cognitive and affective factors.

- ***process-oriented...*** It is concerned with how and why participants develop.

- ***ongoing, formative ...*** It aims to inform curriculum development and training or to explore a particular problem.

- ***supportive...*** It focuses on participants' strengths, what they *can* do rather than what they *can't* do. It starts with what they know and reflects their successes.

- ***collaborative...*** It is done *with* participants, not *to* them. Self-evaluation is an important part of developing metacognitive awareness and involvement in learning. Participants are subjects, not objects, of the evaluation process.

- ***multi-faceted...*** It invites various participants to evaluate each other. Not only do teachers evaluate students, but students evaluate teachers and program dynamics. Interns evaluate training as well as their development being evaluated.

- ***open-ended...*** It leaves room for and values the unexpected; non-predictable and one-time manifestations of change count.

In accordance with these principles, project evaluation emphasized self-evaluation, group dialogue, peer observation, interviews, and ongoing documentation of project work (through minutes of meetings and workshops, anecdotes, and samples of participants' work). In addition, evaluation was integrated as much as possible with training and instructional activities so that it did not impose additional time demands on participants.

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*adapted from Auerbach (1992: 114)

What tools were used in project evaluation?

The following section presents a brief description of tools used to evaluate the workshops themselves, as well as the impact of the project on Mentors, Interns and the sites. As you will see, in many cases, the same tool was used to gather data about Interns, Mentors, and training processes. Several of the evaluation tools used with Interns modeled tools that could also be used with learners. Specific tools used to assess the impact of the project on learners are included in the section on changes among learners below.

interviews	Mentors and Interns interviewed each other early in the project about reasons for participating in the project, educational and work histories, goals, fears, concerns, needs, and future plans. They were interviewed again at the end of the project about their views of the training (to what extent it met their needs, its strengths and weaknesses), their views on teaching, their views of their own growth (self-evaluation), their views of the project as a whole, the impact of the project on their lives, and their career or educational goals. These interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. Quotes from these interviews are included in the following sections. In addition, each Mentor interviewed one learner about the impact of the classes on his/her life. Sample interview questions are included in the Appendices.
minutes of staff meetings and workshops	All project meetings and workshops were documented through minutes. Minutes of **training workshops** included accounts of what happened (topics discussed, presentations, etc.), participants' responses (discussion of issues, questions, and reactions, including quotes where possible) and evaluation discussions. Minutes of **staff meetings** recorded feedback from site-based evaluations of training workshops, Mentor observations of Interns' applications of training content, and issues arising from practice at the sites in order to inform future workshops. They also documented recurring issues, as well as changing Mentor needs and concerns about supervision and mentoring. See Appendices for sample workshop minutes.
learning logs	At the end of the first several workshops, participants were asked to fill out a form called a Learning Log to evaluate the session. The logs asked questions about what they liked, didn't like, had learned and wanted to learn. We had hoped this form would also be something that Interns could use with learners. Often, however, participants didn't have time to complete these forms, and forgot to bring them to subsequent workshops. We abandoned this form of evaluation mid-way through the project.

samples of participants' work	Mentors and Interns often brought in samples of exercises that they had developed, lesson plans, examples of their students' work, and accounts of activities from their classes. Mentors brought in site-based evaluation forms that they had developed and/or documentation of training activities that they had facilitated.
participatory evaluation exercises	At the mid-point and the end of the workshop sequence, we included group exercises in which participants identified issues they were struggling with in their practice, goals for future training sessions, and priorities for the workshops.
site-based evaluation discussions	Site-based teacher-sharing meetings included evaluations of workshops (feedback from Interns about what they did and didn't like in previous sessions) as well as evaluation of practice (assessing how classes were going and the transition from training to practice); Mentors sometimes structured evaluation sessions to trigger self-reflection by Interns.
peer observation	One of the early trainings focused on peer observation. Participants then observed each other and reported back to the whole group at a subsequent workshop. In addition, Mentors did ongoing informal observation of Interns and reported observations at staff meetings.
site surveys	Each site filled out a questionnaire to gather data about the impact of the project on the site. It included questions about the number of students served, types of student (literacy levels, nationality, language background), neighborhoods served, number and type of students on the waiting list, changes in the waiting list, family data, number of family members impacted by the project, etc.. In addition, each site provided a statement about their needs and goals for the project. The sites responded to the questionnaire to the extent that they had data available - in some cases, they were unable to provide data that we sought for project purposes; for example, we had hoped to gather information about the family situations of learners in order to assess our family literacy objectives, but this information was not part of site record-keeping.

What was the impact of the project on Interns?

a cautionary note

One of the most important lessons we learned in our training process is that changes don't occur linearly or evenly: individual Interns reacted differently to the same training experiences (as indicated in Chapter 4). A number of factors - their prior educational experiences, their current life situations, their reasons for participating in the project, the context of their sites (including the influence of other teachers and activities at the sites) - all shaped the ways that their ideas and practice developed. Thus, how they changed cannot simply be attributed to the training itself.

In addition, the impact of the project was not always visible during the life of the project; many of its positive effects only surfaced after it was over. For example, one of the BCLTP Interns said that she only realized the value of the training when she was hired as a teacher months after the project ended: it was then that she appreciated having been given a *framework* for curriculum development, rather than a specific *methodology*, so that she could adapt her practice in accordance with students' needs.

By the same token, 'successes' cannot be counted by looking at 'outcomes' at only one point in time. In one case, for example, a BCLTP Intern started with quite a traditional, mechanical approach to literacy instruction; through the course of the project, she moved toward a more learner-centered style of teaching; however, when she continued as a volunteer after the BCLTP funding (and the support of a Mentor) ended, she reverted to a mechanical approach.

All of this is to say that to reduce Intern changes simplistically to a 'before' and 'after' analysis (framed strictly in terms of "outcomes of training") would be misleading: it would miss the uneven development of the process and fail to capture the cumulative, cyclical nature of growth. Thus, the following analysis of the impact of the project on Interns will look at various stages of their thinking and practice, rather than just at results.

The next section examines several broad categories of change among Interns: changes in their ways of thinking about and participating in training, changes in their conceptions of literacy and literacy education, changes in their actual classroom practice, changes in their views of themselves and their goals, and, changes in their roles outside the classroom.

training:
changes in
expectations

Many of the Interns came into the project expecting and wanting a transmission model of training. Perhaps because of their own prior educational experiences and their lack of confidence about teaching, they wanted to be told what to do and given a 'method' to apply in the classroom. As one Intern stated in the interview at the beginning of the CTAFL, *"I want to get techniques."* This expectation may have been reinforced by the fact that this was called a *training* project: the word 'training' itself implies that a skill will be transmitted. After the BCLTP, we recognized this danger and specifically addressed it in the letter welcoming Interns to the CTAFL project, stating that we would be exploring an approach, not focusing on methods (see Appendixes).

Interns embraced the participatory model of training at various rates; quite early in the project, some not only accepted it, but actively took on responsibility for explaining it to others. For example, at a site evaluation of one of first workshops, when one Intern said that she had expected a more formal presentation of methods, another responded that the purpose of the workshops wasn't to present only one way to do things, but to provide a place to share ideas and debate with each other.

changes in
notions of
expertise

As the workshops created a context for Interns to reflect on their own experiences and generate the collective knowledge of the group, their notions of what counts as expertise began to change. Gradually they began to value their own knowledge and gain a sense of themselves as experts. In place of asking us to tell them what to do, many began to see each other as resources and appreciate opportunities to hear from each other. As one Intern said,*"sharing with others makes me understand how to work with my own little group."* Toward the end of the BCLTP, Interns had enough trust in their own knowledge and practice to directly challenge the expertise of an outside presenter; they did this through a series of questions designed to highlight the relationship between theory and practice, indicating that even though the presenter knew a lot about theory, they had a stronger base of practice and, in fact, could teach her a lot. The following excerpt from an interview sums up the process that many of the Interns went through:

> *To tell you the truth, in the beginning, when I started to go to the training, I was expecting that you would give us the materials and show us the way to teach. That was my idea. When I started going, I thought, gee, this was different. Why*

> *did they come with these different ideas, why didn't they tell us "you have to do this and that"?*
>
> *...to tell you the truth, the more I went to the trainings, I really enjoyed it. I saw the different ways you were introducing and I think that was the best idea - not the way we are used to doing it: you do this and you follow. You gave us the opportunity to grow - not to depend on somebody else. The workshops gave us the ideas and we wanted to apply them. At least they give you the ideas, and it's up to you...So, I think it works better that way. In my opinion, it's been wonderful. I look through the notes and when I read them, I know I can apply them. If I think it would be too difficult, I try to do it another way where it would be more simple and they [the students] would understand. But the ideas are great... I didn't expect that in the beginning.*

Another Intern described the change as follows:

> *That's what I was expecting when I first started - I said, you know, "well they don't tell me what I'm going to do so how can we implement it?" Maybe because we were new; but now that I know how you work, it was easier to understand what you were doing. Now you are more able to use the tools and you can bring your own ideas and then you can do different things. I can abstract them and not use them exactly the way you tell us; you do a little change, but it works the same way. This comes easy when you know how the project works.*

By the end of the CTAFL, conceptions of training had changed to such an extent that one of the Interns' criticisms of the workshops was that too much time was spent on presentations, and not enough allotted for Interns to share their practice with each other.

changes in participation in training

Interns' ways of participating in the training also changed: while at first they saw themselves as passively absorbing 'received knowledge,' they increasingly took on responsibility for bringing their own knowledge and experience into the trainings as content for discussion and dialogue. They brought in samples of their work, actively participated in exercises, and, in some cases, led workshops (in the BCLTP, one Intern designed a session on using games and, in the CTAFL, an Intern co-facilitated a session on a breast cancer curriculum). Perhaps the strongest indication of their sense of participation and 'ownership' of the training was their increasing ease in critically evaluating workshops.

literacy and literacy pedagogy

changes in conceptions

Changes in Interns' conceptions about training were mirrored by changes in their conceptions about what literacy is and how it should be taught: just as they had started by expecting a somewhat traditional model of training, many were preoccupied with mechanical aspects of literacy instruction at first. Many viewed literacy acquisition as a linear process starting with the smallest units (letters and sounds), moving through decontextualized subskills and achieving mastery at each level before moving on to the next. For them, acquiring these skills preceded reading or writing whole meaningful texts, thinking or connecting literacy to life experiences. Some saw their own role as transmitting skills to students.

from decoding to meaning-centered teaching

Again, however, there was unevenness among Interns; those who grasped a participatory approach to literacy pedagogy first actively took responsibility for challenging the others' ideas. For example, when one Intern said that she thought that the approach to education was too informal ("I don't think we can solve the problems of the world. Why do we talk about unemployment - this is not a jobs agency"), another Intern responded,***"So where is thinking left if you present worksheets and follow formal methods?"*** When one Intern argued that talking about social issues is OK for teaching literacy in third world countries but not in the U.S., another countered, ***"But isn't that part of life? And life is what we use to teach them!"***

from problem-solving to problem-posing

Once Interns began to see the value of connecting 'the word' (mechanical aspects of literacy instruction) and 'the world' (students' life experiences and concerns), many of them felt overwhelmed and inadequate. They wondered how they could address students' enormous problems in class and, at the same time, felt the need or desire to solve the problems *for* students. Gradually, however, as they gained more experience in developing codes, using participatory tools, and heard about others' successes in the workshops, many of them began to try new things in their teaching. This, in turn, pushed them to change their ideas. Thus, changes in their thinking triggered changes in their practice, and vice versa (changes in their practice are described in the next section). Through this process, they began to see their role as one of posing rather than solving problems.

Evidence of changes in Interns' conceptions about literacy comes from the ways in which they talked about literacy pedagogy at various points. For example, the same Intern that expressed the desire for techniques in the beginning of the CTAFL, said, at the end of the project, ***"Teaching is an art. When you become a teacher, you become an artist."*** He went on to say that he liked reading Freire's writing because, ***"I see so many thing I could learn from those books... You don't learn procedures, steps that you could follow for teaching adults. I see the books in terms of general philosophy, not specifics."*** Early in the first cycle of training, for example, after an entire workshop on drawing out student issues and using them to develop LEA stories, when Interns were asked if there was anything else they wanted to talk about, they focused on a spelling problem in Spanish; just a few months later, however, when the group did a brainstorming activity about literacy pedagogy, the key concepts that they mentioned included "learners' contexts, critical thinking, content, respect, discover, explore, problem posing, codes, issues..."

changes in conceptions of teacher-student roles

Interns' ways of talking about learner and teacher roles also changed; increasingly they began to talk about learners as central to the educational process. Whereas, at the beginning of the project, some Interns said that being a 'good' teacher entails having a lot of knowledge, at the end, they said that a good teacher is someone who listens to students. At the end of the project, one Intern talked about the roles of the teacher as a facilitator and guide,***"someone who unveils or awakens the soul"*** and the student as***"someone who guides the teacher."*** Another, in describing how he teaches initial literacy in Creole, said, ***"I don't say anything. I find all that I want in students' mouths. I write sentences on the board after they give them to me."*** A third one said about students,

> ***Their judgement is good; they might not be able to read and write, but when they talk, their logic is good. When you first start teaching, you see a lot of people older than you, and if you have something to tell them, you don't know how to tell them. You learn that you can't impose on adults, you have to exchange with them.***

One Intern said that rather than deciding students MUST learn a certain way, he tries to find out what they need and want. ***"My job is not to give them knowledge; they're not empty - there is some knowledge in them which is not conventional knowledge that we need to develop."***

The following excerpt is a particularly telling example of how Interns changed their views of teacher-learner roles. It comes from an end-of-project interview with an Intern who had started with a traditional and authoritarian style of teaching:

> *At the beginning I didn't know what to expect teaching even though at home [in Guatemala] I did it before. But down there we used a different way to do it. This way, over here, instead of being structured, it's like you are part of the classroom too, like the students. You belong to them... You do what they feel comfortable with and if you see that something is not working you try to change it to work.*
>
> *I feel like family with them. It's like I belong to them. It's not like "I'm here to teach you and you have to learn." I think they feel comfortable with us too. You can tell the way they express themselves. It's the way you teach them. You don't go over there and say, "Well I'm here just to teach." No, you tell them, "If you think that we're not teaching right let us know, that's what we're here for because YOU people are the teachers," I tell them. "I'm the student, I'm learning from you guys." And it is true, you learn from them. They learn from you, but you learn from them too because their ideas sometimes work more than your ideas.*
>
> *At the beginning, it was very difficult for me to change the way I was teaching because I was afraid to implement it. I was like, "Will that work or no? Let me try." Maybe because the way I was brought up and the way I went to school, the way they teach. But to be honest with you, I think the best way to teach is the way you people taught us to do it. You can see that the students learn.*
>
> *You get them to know their ideas too, to see what their ideas are. You work with their ideas. That's what I do most of the time, I get their ideas, "What do you think we have to do now? What would you like to do." I say, "I'm not here just to teach; I'm here to find out what is happening." Like if somebody has a headache, what to do when you go to the doctor. That's the way you start communicating with them. And it has been easy that way. You get their ideas and that's the way you start teaching.*

from uniform to context-specific curriculum

A related change concerned Interns' conceptions about a pre-packaged vs. a context-specific curriculum. In place of wanting a particular method to apply across the board, Interns came to realize that each context is different and that the curriculum must emerge from work with a particular group of students. They began to resist simplistic prescriptions, as the following comments illustrate:

> ***The techniques in the video might not work for everybody. It is up to each teacher to try out what will work with your group. Any time someone presents a technique like in this video, it's always very limited. Whether it will work depends on the context of your class.***

This shift from a transmission model of literacy pedagogy to a learner-centered, context-specific one is captured by the following quote from an interview with an Intern:

> ***You cannot transplant, you cannot think, "Hey, E. tried this, and I am gonna try it in my class because it worked for her." No, it doesn't work like this. You have to know your own students in such a way to really get something good out of them. There aren't any specific tools that will always work because each learner has his own problem and I am supposed to find it. What I learned from all those workshops - there is a problem and you as a teacher are like an investigator - you have to find it and once you get it, then you say, "This is how I'm going to work."... The context of the students is very important.***

changes in classroom practice

from following to taking initiative

What the Interns actually did in the classroom also mirrored their changing reactions to training. At the beginning, some relied heavily on the Mentor, passively observing, waiting to be told what to do, or following the teacher's lead. Gradually, however, they began to take on more responsibility (first working with individual students, then with small groups, then with the whole class under the Mentor's supervision, and finally with their own classes). They began to adapt training activities to their own contexts (eg. developing a chart activity around Valentine's Day, developing games to introduce the reproductive system). One Intern invited a friend who had been involved in Haiti's literacy campaign to come to the HMSC to meet with students and Interns. Others took the initiative in developing lessons and introducing new activities. The following excerpt from workshop minutes shows how one Intern developed her own tools for learner assessment:

E. said that periodically she gives students 20 minutes of free conversation time in order to evaluate themselves; she says, ***"Today, I want a soup."*** This means they have to sit in mixed language groups and talk while she leaves the room. When she comes back, they have to report on what they discussed.

integrating planning and responsiveness

Interns' practice also changed in regard to curriculum and lesson planning. At first, many didn't feel confident about teaching without a pre-determined curriculum. Yet often, when they had a plan, it didn't work out in reality. For example, one Intern started by trying to implement a weekly sequence (teaching writing on Mondays, vocabulary on Tuesdays, reading on Wednesdays, etc.); when this didn't work, he began each day by asking students what they wanted to do. He evolved toward drawing themes from their lives and developing them through the routine use of certain tools (LEA, codes, etc.). Another Intern describes how she addressed this tension between planning and responsiveness with the support of a Mentor:

> *I would go to class with the idea, "O.K., this is my plan" but I would just cover one thing. I would feel bad because I had this plan and I wanted them to learn more. At the beginning, I felt sort of tense because I felt, "Now what should I do? Should I go with the flow or should I cut them." But I realized that, in many cases, you learn more when you are actually thinking. For example, if I saw that most of the students were on that one topic, I would just let them stay on it because they were interested in that, whereas, if I cut them, they would probably get bored....*
>
> *I also could see Ana: sometimes she would come in and say, "This is what we are more or less going to do in class today." Once we were in the class, the same thing happened. She would be O.K. If I were in her shoes, I wouldn't know what to do or how to do it. Sometimes I felt pressured. But once I was actually there, I had to have all my five senses awake and see if I could actually do something. I pretty much went with the flow. I would come to class and have this in my mind and I would work from that. I could see reactions in the students. Sometimes they were bored, they didn't want talk, so I had to change it. What I always tried to do was*

> ***see how students reacted. Before I would just freeze. I wouldn't know what to do. I would just follow the textbook: "O.K. Keep reading," but it helped a lot to see how Ana dealt with the classes, because in so many cases, she'd have things prepared and then completely change because someone just came in and asked for something and they would concentrate on that.***

One group of Interns got to the point where they consciously chose not to develop an a priori curriculum until they had met their students because they couldn't know what to prepare until they knew more about their students. Later, when one of them was hired as a teacher, she asked if she could throw out the site's general curriculum guidelines for her class and create a new one appropriate for her students. In general, by the end of the project, Interns became more comfortable both with developing their own plans and with going with the flow. Julio captured the essence of this approach when he said, ***"It's important to plan and let the improvisation come from the class reaction to the plan."***

from form to meaning

Many Interns tended to focus mainly on decontextualized skills in their work with students when they started; they were preoccupied with form and accuracy (correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc.). In one case, an Intern even went so far as to correct students' papers for them, erasing incorrect forms and replacing them with the correct ones. Gradually, however, the question of correct form stopped being a central preoccupation. Interns began to see that students wrote more and developed more quickly if meaning was the focus. They began to experiment with other activities - introducing pictures, eliciting stories, etc. As they saw the effectiveness of these activities, they became more confident in using them. One Intern, in talking about changes in her practice in an end-of-project interview, said:

> ***We use pictures now for them to write about; it was kind of difficult for them at the beginning, but the more you introduce the pictures, the more ideas they have and they start writing. That was a big advance for us. Before, they used to write just a word or small sentence. Now what they write makes sense. So the pictures help a lot.***

A particularly telling example of the shift from preoccupation with form to focus on meaning comes from the beginning and final interviews of an HMSC Intern: while at the beginning of the project he said, ***"When you teach writing it's important to focus on spelling the words clearly, without mistakes,"*** at the end, he said:

> *The dialogue journal is a good process of teaching because you get in communication with the students. You develop ideas from them. You are on the same level with them, and when you are on the same level with the students, they feel comfortable to express their ideas or their thinking. If they write and you only correct, without giving them any response, it will be like STOP - no more ideas. When you respond and tell your students to respond, then you keep on going, getting ideas from it.*

ability to use a range of tools

Even when Interns began to see the importance of drawing out learners' ideas, they were often at a loss about how to connect discussion to literacy learning. Some classes would have heated debates about world events and then go back to rote work on sound-symbol correspondences (like the Intern who elicited an animated discussion about a picture of a jail, but cut it off to 'get back to work'). As Interns gained skill and confidence in using the tools, their ability to integrate the mechanical and meaningful aspects of teaching increased. In terms of finding topics or themes, where many had started either by just asking students what they wanted to do, or by imposing topics, they learned how to elicit issues from students through structured activities. Interns learned to make mechanical exercises interesting by connecting them to learners' lives (eg. an ESL Intern taught *wh-* questions by eliciting what students knew about a Haitian singer performing in Boston). One Intern summed up this change in ability to use tools as follows:

> *Now I have more tools. I can have a topic and I can take it in any direction I want. At the beginning, no, I just got the book and did it the way it was. Now I have this new skill because of the experiences that we have shared. I don't even have to look at readings or books. I just get the topic and I can change it the way I want.*

from teacher- to learner-centered roles

Interns' practice also changed with regard to teacher-student roles and classroom dynamics. In some cases, Interns began by seeing themselves as the center of all interactions. Side conversations between students were considered discipline problems. One Intern, for example, initially had students work quietly at their seats while she went over each one's homework individually with them. If there were problems with particular students or tensions between students, Interns felt that they had to intervene as the authority to 'handle the problem.' Differences in levels between students were seen as problematic; groups were separated by level.

As time went on, however, Interns began to reconceptualize issues of classroom dynamics and experiment with different participant structures. Side conversations sometimes came to be seen as opportunities instead of diversions. In one case, an Intern noticed that one group was having an excited discussion while she was working with another group and asked them to write about whatever they were talking about; this became the basis for a group story. Some Interns began to see differences in level as a resource rather than a problem. The Intern who had required students to work quietly at their seats invited advanced students to work with beginners. Several Interns moved toward building peer learning and mixed level groups into their classrooms.

Interns also began to involve students in addressing teaching problems. In several cases, Interns brought issues of dynamics back to the group (eg. use of the L1 in ESL class, uneven participation, children in class, etc.), and students developed guidelines for handling them. Interns' new way of seeing their relationship to learners is captured by the following words:

> *In my teaching, I try to really do the things we learned or heard in our training. I tried to do them because they were new to me. And in those things, I see that the students are the bosses. They have to participate in giving us the materials for teaching... It's like we listen to them. That's what I do in my teaching.*

ability to find and create materials

Another area in which Interns' practice changed concerned finding and creating materials. While at first, Interns hoped to be given the perfect text to guide their teaching, they gradually began to take greater initiative in finding and developing their own materials. Native language literacy Interns often asked for friends or family to send materials from their home countries. One Intern developed her own method for incorporating pictograms into sentence exercises. Others invented games. One developed an entire math curriculum for his literacy class. The HMSC Mentor and Interns decided to form a materials development group because they felt they were just as capable of creating materials as their counterparts in Haiti, and probably in a better position to do so.

a stance of inquiry toward practice

Many Interns began to address questions and push forward their practice by experimenting with various activities or tools. For example, one Intern tried two ways of presenting pictures as a catalyst to writing, once with structured questions and once without; afterwards she concluded (contrary to her expectations) that the open-ended way worked better because it allowed space for students to write about their own experiences. One ESL Intern summed up this newfound stance of inquiry as follows:

> ***Before, [teaching Spanish to friends], I would present pictures and I wouldn't feel comfortable that that's O.K. to do. In this project I realized that it's O.K. to try even if it doesn't work. Because that's the way you find things out, you find either people learn or they don't learn.***

Interns not only engaged in this type of exploration but recognized its value and came to see it as one of the strengths of the project. At a conference presentation, when someone in the audience noted the great range of methods presented, Interns responded by saying that one of the great things about the project was that it gave them the freedom to explore and investigate their own ways of doing things - that they could try whatever made sense for their own groups and evaluate how it worked. One Intern said that she felt the best way to learn to teach was by observing students.

ability to be
self-critical
and
reflective

As Interns became more reflective about their work, they also became more self-critical about their own practice. They began to acknowledge when classes didn't go well and analyze the reasons. In one case, an Intern hypothesized that students had had difficulty with a particular reading because he hadn't done enough preparation linking it to students' experience; in his words, "Each story has to be in the students' context." Interns began to look to their peers for insights; for example, an Intern reported that his students had resisted writing an LEA story, and asked others for insights about why; they wondered if the story might have been too personal and suggested doing it in the third person. Another Intern criticized her own way of giving feedback to a peer after observing his class (telling him what she thought before asking for his insights). As one Intern said,

> ***Sometimes you don't recognize your mistakes until you have them in front of you or maybe in the end. We have stereotypes and then, by the conversation, you start to realize what you were doing wrong and wonder 'Why did I do that?'***

self-concept

confidence

Many Interns entered the project with some hesitation or fear about their own ability to teach. As one said, ***"In the beginning, it was kind of hard, not only for me but for the students because they do not feel very confident in you, and I felt not that confident too because I didn't have experience working with hem."***

Interns were nervous about standing in front of a group, and about teaching people who, in many cases, were older than they were. They were worried that the students wouldn't listen to them, that they wouldn't know what to do or be able to answer questions. In addition, the ESL Interns were concerned about whether their English was good enough and whether their students would respect them because they weren't native English speakers.

Once Interns started teaching, many were pleasantly surprised by how quickly they felt comfortable and how readily students accepted them. One Intern expressed it this way, ***"I couldn't see myself as a teacher, but I discovered that students were my allies."*** Virtually all of the Interns said that gaining confidence in their ability to teach was one of the most important outcomes of the project for them:

> *This was a very exciting experience. I learned more than I thought because when I started, I didn't feel confident with myself and, you know, I thought I couldn't do it. And now I know that I can... I have more experience. It doesn't take me as much time to prepare classes. I have a lot of ideas now. Of course, I think about what I am going to do - but it is easier - not like before. I didn't know what to do, what would be fine for this day. Should I do this, should I do that? Is this going to be right? I don't feel that insecurity that I had.*

autonomy and expertise

A further indication of Interns' self-confidence was their growing sense of ownership and autonomy over their own work. Interns came to see themselves as peers with the Mentors; in one case, for example, an Intern told the Mentor to be careful about the words he used with students because they might not be familiar with them. In another case, Interns questioned whether they should accept the critique of a university professor (concerning the proverb book) just because he was an expert. Changes in responses to outside researchers also indicated an increasing sense of control and empowerment. For example, when one of the Interns went to a conference in Washington with biliteracy experts from around the country, he felt quite comfortable in criticizing the way the conference was organized.

sense of identity

Increasingly, Interns gained a sense of their own expertise, talking about their identity as professionals:

> *Now I know what to ask and what I need to be able to teach. At the beginning, I was teaching empirically - like a non-professional teacher - I feel now like a professional teacher. As a non-professional, you use what you have - you use your*

> *personal way. Now I follow things that other have done before and I adapt them to my way. Now I'm able to shape them to my own way of teaching. I feel that's a new skill that I have gotten from these workshops.*

Many Interns began to reconceptualize their own histories and take a new pride in who they were. Early in the project, some didn't want it mentioned that they were housekeepers, factory workers, etc. because they saw these low status jobs as a stigma; through the project, they came to realize that this stigma was socially constructed and that their movement from these positions to teaching showed their strength. They realized that their situations in the U.S. were not something to be embarrassed about. One Intern said that since she had been in the U.S. she had tried to avoid her identity: *"I didn't know who I was."* As a Brazilian, she had tried to separate herself from Hispanics and, as she said, "deny who I am so I wouldn't be discriminated against." Through the project, she came to see her unity with other Latinos and to claim it. Another Intern said that the project allowed her to assert her identity as a Central American; she began to see herself as a model for her peers. As she said, *"It gave me the opportunity to show other people from Central America that they can do more than just earn money here.*

changing feeling about work

This sense of helping one's community, in turn, helped to transform the meaning of work for some, giving them a new sense of purpose and joy as this quote from an Intern who worked in a hotel during the day indicates:

> *My life has changed a lot. Now I feel better because I helped them [the students]. I feel nice. When I come to work, I don't say, "Oh, it's time to work," I say, "Oh! It's time to go to class. I like it!" I come happy.*

In addition, several Interns mentioned learning how to work with others as one of the most important ways they changed during the project. One Intern, for example, said that midway through the training she had almost quit because it was so hard to come to agreement with the other people in her group who had strong ideas about what to do; but she realized that no matter what job she has in her life, she would have to work with other people and get along with them, so she should try to learn how to do this. She told her partner in the interview that one of the most important parts of the project for her was learning how to listen and figuring out a way of working together.

beyond the project: changes in career and personal goals

Many Interns changed their plans for the future as a result of the project. As Ana said, ***"The project helped Interns clarify their goals. It gave them the opportunity to look at their skills and what they are capable of doing."*** Some undergraduate Interns who came into the project undecided about their majors decided to major in education. One who had been interested in electronics decided to become a math teacher as a result of teaching math in a Creole literacy class. Several who had been working in factories or as housekeepers decided to continue their education and enrolled as undergraduates at UMass. Some who had started this project as a 'sideline' were surprised at its impact. As one said,

> ***I didn't think I would be so involved. Just to think about further education or to change my field - I didn't expect that. I thought that it would be something on the side. I thought I might pursue another field, but not education... But I'm really pleased that I participated in this project because ... it really helped me in my work and in myself to find a career. I was kind of undecided what I was going to do. But I feel that I have become more stable now, because I tried what I learned in the project and this really worked. And that left me with the feeling, "All right, I'm going to try other things..." That brought me confidence.***

Another said:

> ***I think my plans have changed because I feel like I want to learn more things. I want to go back to school. I have to see other alternatives because this whole project made me realize that I need to know a lot of things that I don't know, explore things that I haven't explored. I think it's a very serious thing to teach. I used to think, "I know Spanish, therefore I can just go teach." But it isn't just teaching the language. It implies a lot of things besides that. Personally I wouldn't like to stop developing that.***

In addition to concrete changes in career or educational plans, Interns spoke about new ways of thinking about their long term goals. One Intern, for example, talked about wanting to work with other Latinas because of having overcome obstacles herself:

> ***Now I would like to do more things - I feel more motivated to do things for women, for Latina women, because now I see that there are not barriers if you want to do something with all your heart. I think our women need hope, they need to set up goals. I feel like a kind of role model. I feel so***

> *angry that young women could do so many things, but they don't have this hope, they don't have this motivation. Especially when we are in a strange country that's very hard, new for us, we have to try to shine in a new world. Maybe someday we can change the world - we won't have machismo anymore in our countries, in our culture. I just hate looking at young women here doing nothing - just waiting for somebody to marry them or have children.*

Another Intern spoke about gaining new insights about her own life and new personal goals:

> *Going through this project made me realize that I have lot of other things that I need to work on personally, like being flexible. I felt I was learning so many things, but at the same time, how to put that all together...I felt frustrated in many cases because I realized that I didn't know how to deal with time, pressure. I realized I was trying to be too rigid: I thought I had to go from one to ten. I guess that' s the way I always tried to do things. But in many cases it didn't work out that way because of time. It made me think... I have this tendency, if I'm going to do one project, I have to go from one to ten. With this whole project, I didn't have the chance to be systematic, to do things the way I was doing it before. I would come to class and have the idea in my mind and work five minutes, and it would be different. I think that was really interesting because I realized that there are so many ways to get to your goal.*

employment experience

For many Interns, the project offered concrete experiences which directly helped them acquire other jobs. As one Intern said, *"The project gives you a ladder; it opens doors."* Participants could put their work with the project on their resumes. One, who was hired as a community liaison for a health education project, said:

> *When we had the first interview six months ago, I wasn't sure what my goals were; since that day my life has changed a lot. I have a new job that I never expected to have. I never thought I would get this kind of job. One of the things I'm grateful for is that being in the project helped me to get it. Just to be able to tell them in the interview that I was doing this kind of workshop - that showed them that I was working with the community and that I could develop sensitive curriculum and multicultural curriculum. And now, in my new job, I have to develop curriculum, educational material oriented to a multicultural population.*

new roles and responsibilities

at the sites

Interns not only grew in personal and professional ways, but they also contributed to the development of their own communities and the field of adult literacy as a whole. As they became more self-confident about their practice, they took on new roles both at their sites and in the broader literacy community. At the sites, Interns began to help with recruitment, in-take, assessment, and site publications: Harborside Interns conducted an open house for potential students; Interns at the JMCS were largely responsible for the publication of the Center magazine; HMSC Interns helped to organize center-wide discussions of Creole literacy. Many Interns showed incredible commitment to their students by taking on additional responsibilities without pay: they stayed late to tutor them after class, took them to the hospital or lawyers, and helped them with personal problems. As one Intern said:

> *I feel like the center is my other home. It's so comfortable with the students. You get used to them and you see the need. They bring their letters in English and you can translate it for them, the bills, the phone calls; so it's not only teaching them, it's the other extra help that we can give them. I know about taxes so they come to me. If they need a letter to send out, I do it for them.*

Another talked about the project changing her perspective on her relationship to the community. In the process of learning how to listen as a teacher, she became more involved in the lives of the learners and her commitment to the community grew:

> *[The teaching] makes me change in my relationship with other people. By listening you think more, you think more of other people, you become more a listener, you listen more to people. And I also think that being involved in the project, I am always talking about it and I think that that does change me in a sense that I'm always encouraging other people to be more involved in the Haitian community. At first I didn't care, but now I take time just to get people to volunteer and to speak with them about the project. In the beginning I wasn't really interested in that. And it not only changed me but other people told me, "I can see that you are doing something useful or something wonderful" and that is really encouraging.*

in the community

Several Interns took the initiative to extend what they had learned in other community contexts. Interestingly, Interns applied what they learned in ESL to L1 teaching and vice versa. A Spanish literacy Intern started an ESL class in his church, saying, "I use ideas from the workshops in that." Likewise, an ESL Intern began teaching Spanish literacy when she noticed that some of her ESL students couldn't read and write. She spoke about this experience:

> ***I could do it because it was a small group. It was very good. I feel so proud of myself. This man went to first grade in his country. His wife, his sister, his children tried to encourage him to go to school.... When I was teaching him, I noticed that he didn't know how to write and read and he wanted to do it in English, but I said you have to do it first in Spanish. And then I started developing a very basic curriculum in Spanish and he liked it. Every time he liked it more. Then I noticed I had another one - he was acting 'lazy' - he didn't want to read and write. But that was the problem: he didn't know how to read and write in Spanish. So I had 2 students. That's how it started. One day I talked to the wife of the first one and she said, "Thank you very much. I think you must be very nice because now Pedro is very motivated to read and write and we feel so good about it because now he's asking us to help him." That's the thing that makes me want to go ahead and keep going.***

in the broader literacy community

Interns participated in various projects and activities which contributed to the development of the field of adult literacy (particularly during the BCLTP). Some became involved in a State Department of Education assessment project; others shared their work at state-sponsored workshops. One was a member of a Breast Cancer curriculum team. During the BCLTP, Interns participated an International conference in New York to celebrate Paulo Freire's 70th birthday, made conference presentations, and attended a Native Language Literacy working group meeting in Washington.

Interns' ways of participating in conferences changed from being part of the audience to becoming presenters. At first they were quite nervous about presenting, spending long hours preparing and rehearsing what they would say. By the end of the project, they had gotten to the point that they could speak spontaneously with ease, field questions and even be self-critical about their own presentations. They developed their own handouts, flip charts and role-plays, were able to discuss their own and others' conference presentations critically and redesign presentations for changing contexts. In many cases, people from our project constituted the only language or racial minority representation at the conference. As such, the Interns' voices served an important function in raising the issue of diversification of the field.

Categories of change among Interns

This chart summarizes the ways in which Interns changed during the course of the project. While every Intern did not demonstrate change in each of these categories, they represent the overall growth of the group.

Conceptions of training	
	Expectations of workshop content and process Notions of expertise
Participation in training	
	Ability to share and debate ideas Responsibility for workshop activities Preparation and planning of workshops Ability to evaluate training critically Ability to challenge experts Ability to explain workshop content to peers
Conceptions about literacy and literacy pedagogy	
	Mechanical vs. meaningful aspects of literacy Problem-solving vs. problem-posing Teacher/student roles View of the role of methods Uniform vs. context-specific curriculum
Classroom practice	
	Taking the initiative Approaches to and skill in lesson planning Emphasis on meaning vs. form Ability to use a range of tools Skill in facilitating discussion Skill in connecting dialogue to literacy work Teacher- vs. learner-centered roles Ability to vary participant structures Ability to facilitate peer learning Problem-posing ability Ability to find and create materials Stance of inquiry toward practice Ability to reflect on and criticize own practice Ability to address problems of classroom dynamics
Self-concept	
	Self-confidence Autonomy and expertise Sense of identity Conceptions of and feelings about work Ability to work with others
Roles outside the project	
	Changes in career and personal goals Responsibilities at site (recruitment, in-take, etc.) Community participation Participation in local/state literacy projects and conferences

What was the impact of the project on Mentors?

a cautionary note

Although the CTAFL objectives included *Mentor training*, we conducted no formal training sessions specifically geared toward this objective. Rather, we focused on issues of mentoring through informal interactions in staff meetings, on-site experiences, and workshops. In fact, at one point Felipe criticized the fact that we had not done enough specific training for the Mentors. As Coordinator, I was somewhat surprised by this comment, since my perception was that we had integrated Mentor training all along the way through our discussions of supervision and teaching issues in staff meetings. An additional factor was time: because funding arrived late and Interns were not on board until January, we focused most of our energy on preparing for workshops.

Thus, it would be misleading to claim that the changes that Mentors' underwent were a direct result of any specific 'Mentor training'. Rather, a number of factors shaped their growth, not the least of which was their own initiative and creativity in addressing challenges presented by their jobs. In many ways, what the project did was give them a chance to develop skills that they already had, but which had not been recognized or nurtured in prior jobs. In a sense, it could be said that they trained themselves and were trained by the demands of their positions.

Another important point to note about the Mentors' roles is that they were shaped by contextual factors. For example, time constraints affected Mentors' roles in training workshops. During the BCLTP, since workshops were held on a monthly basis and we had staff meetings bi-weekly, there was much more time for Mentors to participate in planning the workshops and actually facilitating different segments of them. In the CTAFL, we barely had time to evaluate each session and plan an overall framework for the subsequent one at staff meetings because they were at two week intervals. Thus, Mentors took a less active role in conducting the workshops. An additional factor which shaped Mentors' participation was the context at their sites. The amount of initiative that individual Mentors took depended to some extent on their sense of control at the sites. The more responsibility they felt was vested in them, the more they invested in developing the work at the sites and the project.

The following analysis of the impact of the project on Mentors is based primarily on what they said during interviews and on examples of actions they took at the sites or in workshops.

changes in teaching

During the course of the project, Mentors changed their teaching in many of the same ways that Interns did. They experimented with new approaches in class and tried out activities that they encountered in workshops. Julio, for example, talked about introducing new activities in his classes:

creativity

> *I can say that I learned a lot from the workshops... There are a lot of things that I would never never think of doing by myself. I can give an example... the free writing, it's something that works very well. I tried what we did in the last workshop - the dialogue journals - in my class yesterday. Without attending those seminars, I would never be able to think about those things. And I love to create things, like the bingo things in my class. That was something I created by myself. I don't mean that I was the first teacher who tried bingo, but at the Center, I was the first one maybe who did it. And I've been thinking about what's new to do. By attending those workshops, I always have something new that I learned. Eh - that doesn't mean all of them work; some don't work, but most of them work, so I learned a lot so far. What's important about it is - from one thing you learn, you can create another thing.*

In addition, Mentors stressed that because they were modeling for others, being a Mentor shaped their practice as teachers. Ana, for example, said that this modeling caused her to become more reflective about her teaching:

reflective - ness

> *Before I was a Mentor, I wasn't as conscious or rational in what I was doing as a teacher. In a way, I think the best way to learn about something is by trying to teach it. When you try to teach somebody else, you have to be clear in what you are doing and you have to have a way of explaining it. I've gotten more reflective about what I do.*

consistency

> *When you reflect on just about anything, there is a change, a change in attitude, a change in style. And, I think, to some extent, that has happened with me. When I am sitting with the students, trying to overhear what is happening at the next table where the Interns are working, I am letting myself be loud so that the Intern next to me can hear what I'm doing and can somehow follow the path. I think it reflects also a certain new consistency in what I do. I used to try a lot of new things just about every night. Now I try to follow certain paths over and over.*

curriculum and materials development

Mentors also took on new curriculum development responsibilities, creating and adapting activities and materials to fit their own contexts. Felipe, for example, adapted what he had learned about the participatory approach as an ESL Intern in the BCLTP to his work as a Spanish literacy Mentor in the CTAFL:

> ***The only difference teaching ESL and Spanish literacy is that the material for the Spanish literacy class has been a little bit complicated to put together. The teaching part is the same. You use the same methods and you deal with students' issues. Using the participatory approach in Spanish literacy has been complicated because you have to be creating the material or trying to use students' issues all the time and there is not much [supporting material] in Spanish. You have to create a lot. We have to keep our ears open.***

Felipe took the initiative in adapting this approach for his component in several ways: for example, he developed a survey form to elicit topics from the advanced class; he brought in picture activities to facilitate the transition from a mechanical to a meaningful approach in the beginning class. He was also particularly creative in integrating programmatic, contextual issues into the teaching itself: for example, when enrollment was down, he worked with Interns and students to develop a video which was used for recruitment purposes; when funding was threatened, students worked on fund-raising strategies for one class period each week. In each case, these activities were linked to literacy acquisition.

administrative responsibilities

Likewise, Julio took on responsibility for developing appropriate materials with Interns. As he said, "We used to have the tendency to think that when we need to get materials, we need to go to Haiti." He and the other Creole literacy teachers began to write their own materials to respond to the needs of Haitian students in the U.S.

Mentors talked about several ways in which their position differed from their prior jobs as teachers. Felipe felt that one of the challenges of a Mentor was taking on new responsibilities for program administration and project documentation:

> *Being a teacher meant less responsibilities; being a Mentor, there is a lot more to do. A lot more to learn... The difference will be paperwork and making sure that you're collecting what you will need for the final report and that kind of thing.*

In fact, Felipe took the initiative in terms of these paperwork and documentation responsibilities to the extent of creating his own Spanish literacy in-take assessment form; he was particularly creative in taking on recruitment and fundraising responsibilities. Julio, too, spoke about the project as increasing his sense of responsibility:

> *In a sense, my participation in this project is a continuity with my life, but at the other side, it's also a change because it gives me what we call the sense of responsibility because I am the person in charge. I have to think about the project, I have to think about what the Interns are doing. I don't want to sound bossy, but what's important, I have to keep contact with them, to know if they have any problem, if there's anything that they need. This gives me an opportunity to evaluate myself as a responsible person, to evaluate myself if I can deal with people without letting them feel that I am their boss, which I don't want. I don't to be their gendarme... I got this from this project because when I was working before, I was not in charge. All I had to do was do my job. So now I have to - I don't want to say supervise - but at least to show my presence as a responsible person. I have to know if everything is all right, if they are not confronting any kind of problem.*

For him, the most challenging part of this responsibility for program administration was balancing conflicting needs:

> *I think the most difficult part of it is that I was not and am still not able to satisfy everybody's demands. Some of the Interns would like to have tutors in their classes; some of them are working with 20 students in the classroom. This is not recommended; this is impossible to work with 20 students doing native language literacy. When they talk to me about it, sometimes I feel guilty, but what helps me a lot is that they trust me. I say, "I do understand that, but we cannot afford to pay anyone else. You have a choice: if you want, you can reduce your class from 20 to 12 students." To be honest with you, I take advantage of them, because I know they will never do that. They will say, "I would never do that - what about those 8 people - you don't want me to ask them to stay home? This is not possible. I would not feel OK to do something like that." This is the most difficult part of the program.*

training and supervisory roles

Julio's comment about not wanting to sound bossy reflected a general concern that Mentors had in taking on responsibilities for training and supervising Interns. Each of them talked about learning to supervise or train in a participatory, non-hierarchical way - learning to be a guide without being a boss. Ana, for example, said that one of the ways she did this was by trying to be a role model, by *showing* rather than *telling* Interns her way of teaching.

> *As a model and as a facilitator, when I work with people who are like me, I think I have the opportunity to show them that we're in the same place, and I have this skill - I am working in this field in spite of whatever has been against us both. This reassures the person who is working with me. I work more as a guide. When they are in my classes, they see what I'm doing and the way I do it. When we sit down to talk, we rationalize what we have done in the class and when there are confusions, we try to clarify them.*

Because Ana was a Mentor in both the BCLTP and the CTAFL, she had several years experience in refining her role. In the following lengthy interview excerpt, she talks about changes she underwent during this time:

providing more guidance

> *When we started this project, I think my attitude was more like, "Well, here they are, five more people. Let's work together." In the beginning, I assumed that they had a mentality that was more attuned to mine. As time went by, I realized that people had great skills (some of them that I don't have) and I also realized that they needed more guidance than I was giving.*

gaining confidence in own knowledge

> *I have gotten much more at ease with what I am doing. I feel much more confident. In the beginning, I felt, "I'm going to work as a team with this group of people and they know as many things as I do so let's put them together and make a team." As time went by, I realized that I knew much more, and that everything has to go through a process and they were as confused as I was when I started. In the past I would ask, What do you think we should do? Now I say, "This is what makes sense to me. Based on this, what do you think?"*

demystifying training

> *The workshops gave me the framework for solving the problems and also for guiding Interns. To some extent, I think before you enter this kind of project, there are certain*

change in understanding of participatory training

beyond the project: changes in career and personal goals

mystiques, a certain mysticism, and as you get into it, as you participate, you understand and get at peace with it, less afraid. For me, the project demystified the training part. I have learned to be a supervisor without being a boss. I come forward more with ideas. I think that the way I demystified the training was that I understood that there were things that I knew that had some value.

As time went by, I started relating to the participation part of the participatory stuff, and coming forward with what I think. Now when people ask me what I think, I say what I think. And then they can take it or leave it. I suggest stuff to do... I don't want to tell them what to do, but I suggest things that can be done. I think I participate more given that I articulate my ideas much more confidently.

Julio defined his training role in terms of sharing what he knew with Interns and encouraging them to learn:

I don't have the pretension to say that I am teaching other people to become a teacher, because being a teacher is something natural. It's like being a priest. But what I can do, or what I think I'm doing, I can lead them a little bit; I can share my knowledge with them, I can share my experience with them and I can refer them to some books; I can refer them to some people that I know, people I learn from; I can encourage them to participate in some seminars. Even when they are boring, it is very important to attend them because I never participated in any seminar where I can say "I regret my participation. No way. Even though what the guest speakers were talking about was not that helpful, I met people that I can exchange knowledge with." So therefore, I also encourage them to attend all those seminars.

For Felipe, being in a supervisory or training position was especially challenging because he had been a peer of the Interns at one point. He dealt with this in creative ways, for example, by having Interns do self-evaluations, so they came to their own conclusions about issues they needed to address in their practice.

Like the Interns, Mentors talked about the project as giving them new ways of seeing themselves and recognizing their own capabilities. Felipe, for example, said:

For me, being a factory worker when I began, I thought that was the job that I would do for the rest of my life. I didn't

> *know anyone to help me. Since then, my life has changed. The project gave me the opportunity to use my skills, not just my hands. This is the other me. I can be a role model for people who want to do something. People look at me and say, "Well, if he did it, why can't I do it?" They see role models and they want to improve - to get better in their lives.*

The project helped Ana to gain a new sense her own capabilities:

> *I have learned and see much better what I know... Before I didn't think that I knew that much. I know now that I really know a lot about this stuff... When I see the interns teaching, I'm observing myself. The new teachers have made me reflect a lot on what I do and how I do it. Who did she/he learn this from? Where did he/she learn this? There are times you feel so proud! Other times you see your own mistakes so clearly you want to hide! ... So I know I can be a good trainer. But it is a continuous reflecting exercise.*

Mentors also felt that the project concretely gave them skills and experience which they could use in future jobs. Felipe talked about the project opening doors that would otherwise have been closed:

> *In my life in this country, the project has meant a lot. Being an Intern was the first opportunity I had to express or to let people know the skills that I had. Now that I'm a Mentor, I consider it like an open door for me to get a good job in this country. In the factory, I used my hands to work. That was basically it... Now I have changed to a new [day-time] job with special education. I didn't have experience from my factory job that would help me in special education, but through this teaching experience, they looked at my resume and said, "Wow, this is something that he might do." I had shown that I had skills.*

the downside - uncertain future

The Mentors also said, however, that even though they would like to work in adult education as a career goal, they were not optimistic about a future in this field. As Felipe said:

> *I am interested in becoming a teacher in adult education, but unfortunately, in this country right now, funding is a problem. I don't see that as becoming a full-time job. For the time that I've been working here, the most frustrating part is waiting for more funding at the end of the project. There is a pressure - Am I going to have a job or am I not going to have*

> *a job? Should I wait? Shouldn't I wait? That's the part I don't like.*

Ana, too, felt that despite all she had learned in the project, these skills would not be valued in the broader society:

> ***Now I find myself with more skills, and given the economy, not much future in this particular field. I feel much more strongly than I felt before about having people from the communities themselves be part of the staff - and not on a volunteer basis! For myself, the project has opened up a whole new panorama, but it has also made me realize how little we are really appreciated.***

contributions to the field of adult literacy

As with the Interns, the Mentors participated in various other projects, conferences, and organizations. Ana was part of a Breast Cancer curriculum project; Felipe was part of a Smoking Cessation literacy project. They participated in the same conferences that Interns did during the BCLTP, as well as a giving a presentation at the international TESOL Convention after the end of the CTAFL.

Categories of change among Mentors

Teaching	
	creativity reflectiveness consistency curriculum and materials development awareness of available resources
Administrative responsibilities	
	recruitment documentation coordination assessment liaison with other site staff fund-raising
Training/supervisory roles	
	guidance confidence in own knowledge demystification of training participation
Self-concept and goals	
	self-confidence sense of self as role model changes in career and personal goals new job opportunities participation in local/state literacy projects and conferences

What was the impact of the project on learners?

As we said earlier, the time frame for the CTAFL was too short to fully assess learner progress: particularly with beginning literacy students, significant progress takes time. Children acquire literacy over a period of years; there is no reason to assume that adults will make dramatic changes in less than a year. However, by looking at the work of both the BCLTP and the CTAFL, as well as approaching learner assessment in a qualitative way, we were able to make some generalizations about the impact of the model on learners. Our approach to assessing learners focused on evaluating classes and groups rather than on assessing individual students. We asked, "How are learners' literacy practices and uses changing?" rather than "How much are they changing?" We were concerned about what learners said or showed about literacy and English in their lives rather than with test scores. [1]

context shapes outcomes

Before analyzing specific changes in learners' proficiency and uses of ESL/ literacy, it is important to note one general finding that emerged as we analyzed student progress. Over and over, we found that *the context for assessment shaped its outcomes:* what students could demonstrate about their knowledge or abilities depended on how they were evaluated. For example, beginning literacy students could readily respond to, "How much will it cost to buy seven pounds of potatoes if each pound is thirty cents?" but might not be able to do the same operations on decontextualized paper and pencil tests or if asked to multiply seven times thirty.

Likewise, if writing tasks had a purpose, focusing on meaning and issues of substance, even the most beginning students could produce rich, substantive pieces; in addition, formal aspects of their writing (spelling, grammar, etc.) became increasingly accurate. For example, very beginning Spanish literacy students could write several sentences about a compelling picture even though they didn't know the whole alphabet yet. ESL students who struggled with textbook exercises about reporting emergencies spoke with ease and eloquence when asked to discuss real emergencies that they experienced in their own lives (utilizing more complex grammar and vocabulary). Similarly, students' ability to read a passage depended on the content of the text rather than on any 'inherent' skill level. What they could read depended on the relationship between the text and their own lives. For example, beginning ESL students at the HMSC eagerly read passages from Voices and the South African book (even though they were syntactically more complex than other texts that the same students found difficult) because they were so interested in the stories. These findings reinforce the notion that *students' competence depends on the context in which they are asked to demonstrate it.*

What tools were used to evaluate students?

charts lifelines	Information about learners' educational, employment and family histories was elicited through classroom activities like the profile charts that Interns did in the training. This information became the basis for subsequent lessons as well as for composite class profiles.
samples of student work	Although portfolios never fully took hold as a system for collecting and analyzing student writing, teachers kept track of changes in student writing by collecting samples of student work. For example, one Intern xeroxed sequences of entries in her students' dialogue journals and analyzed changes in accuracy and quantity of writing. An ESL Intern traced the changes in the use of verb tenses in his students' journals. Another Intern gave each student a notebook to write his/her own words or sentences and collected them from time to time to see how they were progressing. Comparison of submissions to site publications at the end of each cycle also provided evidence of changes in writing proficiency.
informal observation	Teachers did ongoing assessment by looking at students' homework and by noting their oral participation in class and responses to in-class activities. They noted at regular intervals what learners were able to read (from words to sentences to texts; the kind of text, and the length of text). The development of both affective factors (self-confidence) and skills were noted in this way.
formal assessment	Some teachers routinely integrated dictations, spelling tests or worksheet pages from a text as quizzes to see whether students were ready to go on to something new.
contextualized tasks	Sometimes students were asked to do specific tasks which would demonstrate their knowledge; for example, at the HMSC, one Intern asked students to help make the attendance list (by writing their names, addresses and phone numbers). At HCC, students made a video for recruitment purposes. Each of these tasks had a purpose other than assessment, but yielded assessment data.
critical incidents	Spontaneous, unexpected incidents may occur in class, indicating changes in learners' literacy/ESL proficiency or use. For example, when a new student joined the class, old ones realized how much they had learned; when an Intern returned after observing another class for a month he saw great changes; when the site coordinator dropped into class and spontaneously asked students to read

something on the spot, he was impressed with how well they could read. In one case, students identified spelling errors in a U.S. published Creole text, indicating the extent to which they had mastered the orthographic system.

anecdotes

Students often reported incidents reflecting new uses of literacy or ESL in their lives outside of class. They told stories about what had happened at home, at work, in their communities or with their children's schooling.

posted journals

Posted journals are large pieces of newsprint on which participants can write accomplishments at regular intervals. Interns introduced posted journals in several classes as a way for learners to reflect on their own progress and document it for project evaluation.

student self-evaluation

Student self-evaluation took a variety of forms.

•*Class evaluations:* Class evaluation exercises were conducted during and at the end of cycles at each site. In some cases, they were written (eg. for ESL classes). In others, they were group discussions which became language experience stories.

•*Individual interviews:* In several cases, individual students were interviewed at the sites. Sample interview questions are included in the Appendices.

•*Testimony:* In public meetings, students sometimes stood up and gave testimony about their progress; for example, in a site meeting about why Creole was being taught at the HMSC, one student spoke at length about how literacy had changed her life.

checklists

During a CTAFL training evaluation exercise, Interns identified the question,***"How do we know our students are learning?"*** as a training issue, In response to this issue, we developed checklists to systematize their assessments of student progress. The process for developing these checklists unfolded as follows:

•Interns and Mentors brainstorming two lists - *What students could do when they first started classes*, and *What they can do now*.

•We then categorized these lists into types of changes: *In-Class Changes* and *Out-of-Class Changes*.

Some of the In-Class Changes included:

changes in writing (length, ease, genre/type of writing, ability to copy, knowledge of letters, what students can write, thinking while writing)

changes in reading (length, ease, genre, ability to decode, understanding, ability to explain text, ability to use punctuation in reading, ability to read own stories)

changes in how students act (participation, comfort, helping peers)

changes in learning strategies (understanding role of L1 reading, guessing, taking risks)

Some of the *Out-of-Class Changes* included:

Changes in what participants can do with literacy/ESL (reading bills, making budgets, writing money orders, communicating with family, sorting mail, etc.)

Changes in how they feel about themselves (self-confidence, etc.)

Changes in responsibility for the program (participation in recruitment, fund-raising)

•Seeing the changes categorized in this way triggered the realization that there were probably many more kinds of change within each category that could be added to the list.

•Before the next workshop, the Coordinator typed two versions of the category lists - one that included each of the items specified under the broad categories (as well as some blanks under each category) and one that only listed broad categories and had blanks for Interns to add their own itemization of changes under each. These checklist formats are included in the Appendices.

•Interns then chose the format they preferred and summarized learners' changes during subsequent weeks, adding sub-categories and keeping the checklists as a tool for ongoing assessment.

In-class changes

changes in reading proficiency

Students demonstrated a variety of changes in both the quantity and quality of what they could read. The general pattern of progression was from reading key words, to self-generated sentences, to sentences in a textbook, to longer passages in a textbook and teacher-generated passages, to authentic materials. As they progressed, they moved from mechanical decoding to reading for meaning. As one Spanish literacy Intern said, ***"Now they can think while they're reading. They didn't use to pay attention to what they were reading, but now they are paying attention and they can explain."***

In both the Creole and Spanish literacy classes, students who knew only a few of the letters of the alphabet when they started classes were able to read authentic material (eg. an AIDS flyer, a healthy baby brochure, and a newspaper in Creole; a workplace rights flyer, and newspaper articles in Spanish) within about eight months. Creole students with minimal exposure to English eagerly read a book (in English) by a South African literacy student, because, as one student said, ***"All the book is my life."*** In addition, students who at first did not want to read anything outside of a literacy book, gained confidence in reading other kinds of materials.

In ESL classes, Interns reported that their students could understand increasingly complex readings; they brought in newspaper articles that they found interesting as texts for the whole class. One beginning ESL teacher said, ***"Now when I read the class a story, I don't need to repeat it; they understand it the first time."***

changes in writing proficiency

Students' writing changed both in terms of what they wrote about (the content) and in terms of its accuracy (form). Often, students' first tendency was to see writing primarily as copying. The extent and rate at which this view changed depended a great deal on how writing was taught: students in classes where accuracy and spelling was stressed progressed more slowly; when teaching stressed writing as making meaning, students wrote longer and more substantive pieces. For example, Interns at Harborside had initially tended to focus on learning the alphabet before doing more substantive writing; however, when the second group of beginners at Harborside started classes, the Interns invited them to write about pictures, even though they didn't know all the letters of the alphabet, and responded to the content of what students had written. The result was that each student was able to write several meaningful sentences about each picture. As one Intern said, ***"Now you can understand what they're writing... and now, when I ask them what they wrote, they can explain it. That means that at the same time that they're writing, they're thinking, and this is a step that's very difficult to get to. So I can tell that they've improved."***

There was a diversification of genres of student writing through the course of the projects. By the end of the project, students had written journal entries, LEA stories, magazine articles, letters, and photo-stories. In some cases, students began to do personal expressive writing, bringing in pieces that they had done for their own purposes outside of class. In letter-writing and writing for site magazines, students started by generating ideas and went through various phases of revision, thus moving toward a process approach to their writing.

One clear indication of changes in Creole literacy students' writing proficiency can be seen in the kind of submissions to the site magazine. In the first issue after the project started, the teacher wrote a description of the Creole component; the next issue included several language experience stories written by groups of students; the subsequent issue included a few short sentences by individual students; more recently, issues have included a range of entries from Creole students ranging from sentences to paragraphs and page-long pieces.

changes in English proficiency

ESL students progressed in terms of the traditional kinds of change in grammatical proficiency (eg. acquisition of verb tenses, vocabulary, etc.). But they also progressed in the communicative ability - their ease and fluency in conversing about meaningful topics. In describing these changes, beginning students said things like, ***"Now I can talk about Russian history with my classmates;" "I understand the teacher in class now."*** When themes were compelling, their ESL proficiency seemed to increase (as in the case of the students who had difficulty doing workbook exercises about emergencies, but no difficulty talking about real emergencies in their lives). They were able to explore sensitive topics like breast cancer and workplace discrimination. As one Intern said, ***"I gave them the vocabulary and they went from that."***

meta-cognitive changes

In addition to changes in proficiency, students also underwent changes in metacognitive aspects of their learning: they became less preoccupied with form, corrections, mechanics and accuracy, and more concerned with expressing meaning as time went on. They began to value their own knowledge, experience and dialogue as integral aspects of learning. One reflection of this is the following excerpt in which students describe their process of writing stories based on photos.

> ***We got together in the class and studied everything that was in the picture. We chose what was important in the picture so that we could make a lesson because what comes from within us is better than anything else. We discussed the picture and the teacher wrote our words on the blackboard. What is important in that method is that it allows us all to participate in the work of the class.***

The following is a Mentor's account of what one student said during an end-of-cycle interview when asked to describe the most important thing he had learned:

> ***He responded that when he had started class, he didn't think he would learn anything because of the non-formal approach (having discussions in class); however, he realized that he had thought this because he was used to a traditional approach. Now, he feels that it is good that he has learned to analyze things and be more critical of what's going on around him. He said that this is the most important thing he learned because this is something that will stay with him.***

affective changes

self-confidence

One of the main ways in which students changed related to their self-confidence and ability to contribute their ideas to class discussions. Looking back, they said things like, ***"I was shy in class. I didn't feel happy in school."*** But gradually, as one Intern said...

> ***they open up and tell you their needs... They feel like family. The class is a lot of support for them. A lot of them say that as soon as they come to school, they see the difference. Their life changes. You can see that they're losing their fear and getting more into reality. It's like the light comes to them.***

changes in classroom roles and participation

When they started classes, many students refused to write on the board or to draw because they thought it would reveal how elementary their skills were. If they were asked an opinion, they would often repeat whatever the person before them had said; it was difficult to draw out their ideas. Gradually, they became less afraid to make mistakes and take risks. They began to express their own opinions, disagree with each other, and respect each others' opinions. The beginning classes began to bring in their own topics (e.g. the causes of the Gulf War). At times they actively critiqued the Intern or materials, for example, telling an Intern to be on time for class, pointing out errors in textbooks, and making suggestions about lessons.

Students took on increasing responsibility for the class as a whole, developing it as a community and helping each other. When a new student came in and didn't have a job, the others collected money and bought him some groceries. One ESL student who was ready to go on to a higher level asked to stay in her class because, as she told the Intern, ***"You need me."*** One of the advanced Spanish literacy students began tutoring beginners one day a week. The Intern who worked with him said:

> ***Now he can understand more, write more, and he wants to be like a teacher, helping other people. He knows their problems, because they've happened to him. He's concerned about his life; he wants to change."***

use of L1 literacy as a learning tool

Literacy students increasingly began to use their knowledge of L1 literacy to support their English acquisition. For example, Spanish literacy students insisted that the teacher write all new English words on the board at the end of each ESL conversation class. Students also used the metalinguistic knowledge that they had gained in L1 literacy classes (their ability to talk about language and its functions) in supporting their acquisition of English. For example, because they had discussed pronoun use in Creole, one of Julio's students was able to explain the use of pronouns in English as follows, ***"You use 'she' if you want to talk about a woman but you don't want to repeat her name."***

Out-of-class changes

functional uses of ESL and literacy

Students reported many ways that they could independently accomplish various functional tasks as a result of class participation. ESL students said things like, ***"In January, I couldn't understand TV or the radio; now I like to watch TV and listen to the radio! I can go to the store and ask prices now."*** They mentioned being able to call long-distance, call 911, ask an American neighbor for help when locked out, understand the weather forecast on TV, and go to the bank or grocery store independently. L1 literacy students mentioned being able to sort and distribute mail to other household members, write letters home, and use public transportation more easily. Several Creole literacy students got their driver's licenses after organizing a special Creole Driver's Education class. One Spanish literacy student said,

> ***Before, I needed to find somebody to write a letter for me and now I can try to write it. I can go to the bank and try to fill out papers; I can try to find out where I am by reading. I can communicate more with my family.***

self-sufficiency

Again, being able to accomplish these tasks was important to students not just for their functional value, but because of the new sense of self-sufficiency they gained. Many students reported that one of the biggest changes in their lives was they no longer felt that they could be exploited as easily: for example, they could read documents like tax forms, daycare agreements and inheritance papers before signing them. They no longer had to depend on someone else to tell them what they were signing. As one student said, ***"Now, if someone says $50.00 and you see $100.00, you can say 'No, that is not correct!'"***

changes in family relationships

They also said that their new proficiency and independence shaped their family relationships and interactions. For example, one student said, ***"I used to go shopping with my husband, now I go alone."*** Being able to write letters turned out to signify powerful changes in family relationships. Writing the first letter to a family member was an emotional experience, in many cases serving almost as an announcement of a new self. In one case, a student wrote her first letter to her husband and then put it on his pillow; he cried when he read it. Another woman wrote to her son who is an engineer for the first time. Many students said that one of the most important changes in their lives was that they were no longer dependent on family members (or others) to read mail, documents and other official papers for them. As one student said,***"You're not able to write your real feelings when somebody else is writing for you."*** Many felt that their children respected them more because they could read and write.

changes in the workplace

Another domain where students applied what they learned to make changes in their lives was in the workplace. Many students reported having problems at work that resulted from their limited English. In some cases, they had to rely on others because they couldn't understand the boss: for example, one student said that when her boss had said, "You don't have to work tomorrow," someone had translated, "You have to work tomorrow." In other cases, students couldn't make themselves understood. One student, for example, had been working on Sundays even though it was against his religion because he didn't know how to refuse overtime. As a result of classes, he reported later that he had been able to tell his boss successfully, "I go to church Sunday. No overtime."

site roles and responsibilities

Students also took on increasing responsibility at their sites. In addition to tutoring other students, they became involved in recruitment. At Harborside, they conducted an open house for prospective students; in addition, they made a video for public television to publicize the program and organized a fund-raising committee so that classes would be able to continue after CTAFL funding ran out.

community roles and responsibililties

In addition, many students took on new roles in their own communities. For example, one student, who could write only a few words when he started in the program at Harborside, began taking minutes at his AA meeting after about six months of classes. He went to a state-wide convention and took notes so he could report back to his group. Many of the refugees in Creole classes participated actively in community events as a way to integrate themselves into Boston's Haitian community and express support for democracy in Haiti. JMCS students took part in community hearings about the closing of a bilingual program at a local school.

The following excerpt from an Intern interview sums up many of the changes that students experienced, pointing to perhaps the most important change of all - the desire to continue learning:

learning goals

> *I can see the improvements with the students that we have. When they start learning, they are very afraid of communicating, they're very afraid of everything, but as soon as they start learning, you can see how they open themselves, how they can really face life with less pain. They can see things more clearly. When they learn to write and read, it gives them strength to continue and they get a little ambitious. They want to keep learning. I can see the changes in their lives. They know how to communicate with their family - that's very important, especially because most of the people, they leave their families in their countries. They feel proud with their children because they feel "Well at least my kids they know I know how to read.:" They're proud of themselves too because they went a step ahead. A lot of the students are already in an ESL class - students that started with us when they didn't know nothing at all. So they learned Spanish and now they're learning English. They're really improving themselves.*

Categories of change among Learners

In-class changes	**Examples**
Reading proficiency	
	quantity/length of text (letter identification, key words, sentences, paragraphs, stories, articles, books) diversification of genres (proverbs, LEA stories, news articles, brochures, student-written texts, etc.) conception of reading (focus on meaning rather decoding) ability to link texts to lives ability to respond to text
Writing proficiency	
	quantity of writing conception of writing (focus on meaning rather than form/accuracy) self-selection of topics process development (pre-writing, drafting, revision) diversification of genres and purposes (journals, letters, proverbs, writing for publication)
ESL proficiency	
	grammatical development communicative fluency ability to discuss sensitive, loaded issues
Affective changes	
	self-confidence willingness to take risks and make mistakes classroom roles (contributions to class discussion, selection of topics, peer teaching, critique of lessons)
Metacognition	
	conceptions of literacy acquisition conceptions of teaching approach attitude toward dialogue/discussion
Use of L1 literacy as a learning tool	
	use of literacy as a memory aid use of L1 literacy for L2 acquisition use of grammatical/metalinguistic knowledge for L2 acquisition
Out-of-class changes	**Examples**
Functional uses of ESL/ literacy	
	sorting mail, shopping, banking, telephone use, TV and radio, communication with neighbors, driver's tests, documents
Family relationships	
	independence self-respect and respect of children
Responsibilities at site	
	recruitment, peer tutoring,work on site publications fund-raising
Roles in community	
	responsibilities in community organizations participation in community events
Workplace uses of ESL	
	understanding directions communicating needs

What was the impact of the project on the sites?

Any evaluation of the effectiveness of this model must also consider its impact on the participating sites. The following section looks at some of the ways that the sites were affected by the project.

number of classes and students served

The BCLTP and the CTAFL increased the number of classes provided and students served at each site in accordance with the number of Interns whose training was funded at the time. Because the BCLTP paid stipends to four Interns per site, its impact was significantly greater in this regard: during BCLTP, several new classes were added as well as weekly math literacy sessions, and, for a time, Drivers' Education classes at the HMSC. The JMCS had three new classes (taught by Interns) and the Harborside had two new classes; both of the native language literacy sites were able to offer two levels of literacy classes by the end of the project. A total of 200 students per year were enrolled in project classes during the BCLTP. As one of the Mentors said, ***"The sites got a lot of mileage out of the project."*** Of course, the increase in course offerings created a dilemma for the sites once BCLTP and CTAFL funding ran out, since they had no ongoing source of support for these classes.

formerly unserved students served

Second, the project enabled the sites to serve new populations of students. In the case of the JMCS, the BCLTP allowed the site to reconnect with the Brazilian community in the Allston-Brighton area during a time when two of the Interns were Brazilian. At the HMSC, students from the waiting list were able to enroll. In East Boston, a population of students who had never come to the Center because they felt unprepared for ESL now became part of the learner population.

native language literacy components institutionalized

Third, in the case of the HMSC and Harborside, the project was instrumental in achieving the sites' goals of institutionalizing native language literacy instruction. The Creole component at the HMSC, which had existed for several years, was expanded. At Harborside, the Spanish literacy component, although still small, became a site priority in subsequent funding requests.

community needs served

The project also enabled the sites to respond to community needs. For example, when a local hospital wanted to start a new ESL program for its staff, it hired Interns from the JMCS to staff this new program. An Intern was hired as community outreach worker and health educator by a local health center.

staff diversification

Further, the project supported the sites' goals of diversifying their staffs and developing community leadership. In a context where there was considerable local and state attention to multiculturalism and diversity, the project was one of the few concrete initiatives to make these goals a reality. At the HMSC, where several of the Interns had already been working, the project provided supplemental training; it allowed for continuation of training initiatives which had been begun prior to the onset of the project. At the JMCS, several of the Interns who were former site students were subsequently hired by the site. Felipe, who was an Intern at the JMCS during the BCLTP, was hired as a Mentor at Harborside for the CTAFL project.

enhanced quality of instruction

The sites also identified the enhancement of the quality of instruction as a benefit of the project. According to Jean-Marc Jean-Baptiste, the Director of the HMSC, the emphasis on connecting students' reality to reading and writing meant that students became more involved in classes and made teaching more comfortable for both students and teachers. One indication of the impact of the quality of instruction was the fact that student retention was very high in many of the Interns' and Mentors' classes; at the JMCS, for example, Ana reported that retention in her class was 100% during the CTAFL; the HMSC reported a retention rate of 95%.

opportunities for collaboration

Another benefit for the sites was the opportunity it gave for collaboration and networking between agencies. This collaborative work took place on the instructional level, in terms of cross-fertilization between classes and teachers. Spanish-speaking ESL teachers depended on Haitian teachers for insights about their Haitian students. Teachers from one site adapted materials and activities from another for their students. Teachers referred students from one site to another at times. Collaboration also took place on an administrative level: the project provided an informal context for site coordinators to meet on a regular basis to share concerns and address program-based issues. The sites worked together to develop funding proposals and to develop strategies for promoting native language literacy instruction. Although the dynamics of collaboration were not always smooth, the Mentors mentioned the participatory way that the project itself was conducted as a factor in its impact. Ana, for example, said,

> *I also think that the way we did it, the participatory approach, - I think it was good to go through that - having so many parties involved, really trying to be as participatory as you can be with so many people from so many different places and still coming out alive. I also think that the University [staff] played a very vital role... I think the trust the University [staff] gave the Centers was vital to the success of the project. I think by the Centers being able to have their own curriculum, to do the trainings the way they are used to doing it, by giving that kind of trust to the real people, the real work - I think [the University staff] showed that they believe in participation. At least for me that is one of the best things that can happen.*

national attention for sites

Further, the project contributed to bringing national attention to the sites, which, in turn, was beneficial to them in seeking further funding to build capacity and expand services. Partly because of its work to develop Creole literacy instruction (which the BCLTP and the CTAFL helped to develop), the HMSC was featured in three federally-funded studies. The BCLTP Spanish literacy Mentor at the Harborside was invited to participate in a national biliteracy roundtable forum in Washington, DC, and in a Spanish literacy working group in NYC.

the downside

Perhaps inevitably, the collaboration was not all smooth sailing. Because of the recurring issues of time and funding limitations, there was ongoing pressure about how to continue the positive initiatives which had been nurtured by the project. The fact that Interns were not included in the CTAFL budget meant that each site had to develop its own proposals and strategies to fund them. Both project staff and site Education Coordinators spent enormous amounts of time trying to figure out strategies for the continuation of funding. While there was generally a positive sense about the collaboration among participants, some site personnel had differences of opinion regarding the process of documentation and the history of the project. At times, the prospect of termination of funding led to tensions between the sites, between Mentors and Interns, or between staff and students. At one point, several students dropped out of the Spanish literacy classes because of uncertainty about whether Intern funding would continue (however, others then organized their own fund-raising committee to address the problem). As Ana said,*"In spite of how helpful the project could have been, the shortness of the CTAFL and the lack of secure funding worked against it."*

Conclusion: Findings, challenges, recommendations

The work reported on in this Guidebook confirms and extends the findings of other practitioners and researchers indicating that a 'from the community - to the community' model is a powerful and promising approach to adult literacy education for immigrants and refugees in the U.S. This model, which stresses drawing on community resources to address community needs, has been widely implemented in many parts of the world; an increasing number of practitioners and community-based organizations are pioneering its implementation in the U.S. as well (often with little financial support or recognition). Our hope is that this Guidebook will contribute to a significantly broader acceptance of such an approach in this country. This chapter summarizes what we learned in implementing the model; it examines the extent to which we attained our objectives (re-iterated below), as well as the issues we struggled with in the process. For each major aspect of the model, we will discuss our findings, related dilemmas and challenges, and our recommendations.

objectives

1. to recruit and provide opportunities for professional development for teachers and Interns from underserved ethnic minority groups;

2. to develop a multi-faceted, practice-oriented model for training community Interns to teach adult and family literacy based on recent adult literacy research and theory;

3. to train a core group of bilingual Mentors to supervise on-site training and model teaching to community Interns;

4. to train a core group of bilingual community Interns to become instructors of adult and family literacy;

5. to facilitate the development of the literacy proficiency of non-English speaking adults, including parents of bilingual students, increasing their educational attainment, their ability to function in ESL classes and their ability to support the literacy development of their children;

6. to build the capacity of community-based literacy programs serving the needs of adult ESL and literacy students;

7. to disseminate the model so that it can be replicated and implemented on a nation-wide basis.

regarding community literacy instructors...

(related to Objectives #1, 3, 4)

One of the most promising findings in our project was the effectiveness of community-based literacy teachers, both for L1 and for ESL instruction. They represent a powerful untapped resource for serving the large numbers of immigrants and refugees in need of adult literacy/ESL services. Our project suggests that opening the professional ranks to include community instructors may significantly increase both the quantity and quality of available services. In addition, such a model has enormous benefits both for those being trained as instructors and for the field of adult literacy as a whole.

findings

> ***It is very important that we speak the learners' language and we have suffered all the problems they have, because in a way, they can come to us and tell us their problems and we will understand because we have passed by them. We have suffered them.***
>
> Felipe Vaquerano, Intern (HMSC), Mentor (HCC)

Community teachers are particularly effective because of their life experiences and cultural resources:* We found that community-based instructors (both Mentors and Interns), were particularly suited to identifying issues, building trust, and linking literacy with community issues. In addition, they were role models for learners. As one Mentor said, *"People look at me and say, 'Well if he did this, why can't I do it?'"*** Our project confirmed research findings indicating that shared background knowledge with learners, as well as the ability to create an atmosphere of trust, are key qualifications of adult educators.

**Training community-based Interns is a cost-effective way to address increasing demands on the adult education system:* The apprenticeship model in which a Mentor trains several Interns can greatly increase the number of students receiving services without a proportionate increase in cost. As one of the Mentors said, her impact is multiplied by five during the term of the project. In the last year of the BCLTP, 200 students were served who would not other-wise have received services; 100 students who would not have received services participated in CTAFL classes.

> ***Students have a fear right now. They keep asking, "Are we going to another class? I don't want to go to another class. I want to be with you next cycle." I tell them they have to experience another teacher and learn how someone else speaks English... Everyone is recommending to their friends that I am a good teacher. I feel good about it.***
>
> Estela Matute, Intern (JMCS)

**Teachers from the communities of the learners are effective not only for L1 literacy instruction, but for ESL instruction as well:* Over and over, ESL students commented on how much they learned in the classes of Interns. While it is often assumed that ESL teachers should be native speakers of English, our experience indicates that the non-native teachers can be effective teachers in both transitional ESL classes (where they share the learners' L1) and in mixed ESL classes (where participants come from a variety of language backgrounds). Limitations related to the instructors' non-native English were more than compensated for by strengths: their commonalities of experience with learners promoted empathy and trust, as well as enhancing the relevance of curriculum content.

> ***"I see this project as a way of opening doors. For me, I wanted to go to college but I couldn't [for financial reasons] - I didn't want to work in a factory forever. Without the project, I would still be working in a factory. The project got me where I am now."***
>
> Felipe Vaquerano, Intern (JMCS), Mentor (HCC)

**The project provided access to professional and educational development for people from immigrant and refugee communities:* By recruiting adult education students, community activists, and undergraduates as literacy Interns, the project enabled participants to embark on a professional path that would not otherwise have been open to them. It was the first opportunity for many to move out of unskilled manual jobs into teaching or community service: an ESL student who was working in a plastics factory became an Intern and went on to become a Mentor and a

Special Education teaching assistant; another former ESL student who worked as a housecleaner when she started as an Intern went on to become a community health educator; other Interns were hired as social service workers, day care workers and, in several cases, ESL or native language literacy teachers; one Intern set up an ESL program at his church. In addition, the project prompted many to further their own education: an Intern who was getting his GED when he started the project went on to enroll in the University; two Mentors re-entered the University to complete their undergraduate educations. Several Interns decided to major in education and/or changed career goals toward teaching. Thus, this model offers the opportunity for people with otherwise underutilized skills to become resources for community development, as well as giving them a way out of the unskilled jobs to which immigrants and refugees are often relegated.

**Community teachers contribute to the development of the field of adult literacy:* Because of the background and experiences they share with adult learners, community teachers can provide insights into the concerns, needs, and learning processes of learners, adding to the knowledge base of the field. Not only can the field learn from their perspective, but they can contribute to the much-needed cultural diversification of the field. Interns and Mentors made numerous conference presentations about their work; frequently, they were the only language minority representatives at conferences they attended. This model provides a clear structure for the development of people with the potential to enrich and diversify the field of adult literacy.

dilemmas and challenges

**Increasing responsibilities without increasing stipends:* As Interns progressed, their skills and responsibilities increased up to the point when they began to teach independently. They then had all the responsibilities of regular teachers (planning, materials development, teaching) in addition to training meetings, workshops, conference presentations, and, in some cases, additional site tasks (assisting with recruitment, work on the site magazine, etc.). Yet, they continued to receive stipends for a fixed number of hours per week at a rate of pay lower than that of teachers. Thus, the fact that the model is cost-effective (because it extends the number of students served through the use of Interns) has the potential to result in an exploitative situation for Interns.

Shortage of jobs and funding for trained teachers: Once Interns were trained, they sometimes had difficulty finding jobs for which they had been trained. The insecurity of funding for project classes after the end of the grant period meant that Interns who were eager to teach sometimes left for other jobs. Both Interns and Mentors felt conflicted: on the one hand, they loved their work and, on the other, they were discouraged about future possibilities in adult education. There was no system to place them once they had been trained or to follow up on them beyond the end of the project.

recommendations

Training opportunities for people from the communities of adult learners should be expanded: Community teachers are an untapped resource with significant potential to address the growing need for ESL/literacy services. Resources should be made available to replicate the model so that communities and Interns can benefit.

The ranks of the ESL profession should be opened to include more people from the communities of the learners: Whether or not community teachers share the first language of learners, their common experiences are a significant resource which can more than compensate for non-native speaker status (given a certain threshold of ESL competence). The myth that native-speakers of English are the best ESL teachers must be re-examined.

Teacher-learners should receive adequate compensation for the services they render: The pay structure for Interns should reflect actual responsibilities and take into account variability as Interns increase their workload. As Interns become more experienced, their pay should be on a par with teachers who do similar work.

New job categories should be created and job qualifications revised to ensure that the resources of community people can be utilized in adult education: The traditional notion of hiring only teachers with college degrees and/or certification must be re-examined because it excludes people who have much to contribute to the field. Qualifications such as familiarity with learners' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, life experiences and community issues should be given consideration in hiring adult ESL/literacy teachers.

Resources should be ear-marked for the hiring of trained community instructors: Job categories for community instructors should be created so that people who have received literacy training like that provided in the project will have a career path open to them upon completion of training. Adequate funding should be allocated so that Interns will have job opportunities once they have received training.

Regarding training...

(related to Objectives #2, 3, 4)

Our project indicated that, given adequate training time, a participatory, inquiry-based model for training literacy instructors can be highly effective and empowering for participants. Combining observation, Mentoring, workshops, and teacher-sharing meetings allows a range of contexts for developing teaching proficiency and for addressing teaching issues.

findings

**Observation, mentoring, training workshops, and teacher-sharing meetings complement each other in supporting the development of teacher-learners:* The effectiveness of the training derived in large part from the combination of site-based training guided by Mentors and university-based workshops in which participants from various sites shared experiences. Providing a range of training contexts allowed Interns to see, participate in, and discuss teaching. They could move back and forth between theory and practice, participation and reflection. Mentors can both serve as models and offer feedback to Interns about their own teaching; workshops can present and model approaches, as well as providing a context for exchanging ideas; teacher-sharing can promote a problem-posing stance toward practice and allow for peer exchanges. None of these in themselves would have been as effective as the combination proved to be.

> ***I realize now the best thing in the teaching process is to observe the students - to find the thing you need to know to help them.***
>
> Ernst Germain, Intern (HMSC)

**The participatory training model encouraged teacher-learners to become problem-posers and researchers of their own classrooms:* Because the workshops modeled a participatory process, rather than transmitting skills or techniques, Interns learned to investigate the issues and dynamics of their own teaching contexts and develop context-specific instructional strategies. They moved toward valuing active learning for themselves as well as their students. Interns learned to be creative in responding to student needs and generating lessons/materials; they developed a stance of critical inquiry in addressing classroom problems.

We learned more useful things, things that are really going to help us teach [in the later workshops]. I don't know if the same things were in the others [earlier ones] and I just wasn't aware of them. I really wasn't ready or I didn't recognize those things because of my lack of confidence. Now I am more open to everything in the workshops because I have more experience. Now I know what to ask.

Estela Matute, Intern (JMCS)

**Learning to become a teacher takes time:* One of the most significant differences between the BCLTP and CTAFL concerned training time. The length of the training cycle (number of months of training) is critical in determining the extent to which Interns become independent, reflective, and responsive teachers. Because it takes time to unlearn much of what they have internalized through their own education, and become socialized into a new way of thinking about teaching, we found that at least a year is necessary for this process. Not until Interns have participated for several months are they really 'open' to the approach of the workshops.

**Logistical factors relating to workshop timing are critical to their effectiveness:* Again, based on our experience with the two projects, we found the energy level, sense of community, and participation in workshops varied according to factors such as time of day, day of the week, and number of workshops per month. During the BCLTP, workshops were held once a month on Saturday mornings for three hours, whereas, during the CTAFL, they were held twice a month on Friday afternoons at 3:00 for two hours. The fact that they were late in the day on Fridays meant that people were rushing from other jobs, often tired and pre-occupied about getting home to family responsibilities. The fact that workshops were only two hours long meant that there was less time to get into topics in depth, and often the sharing between participants was curtailed - so the sessions seemed less participatory. The fact that the workshops were held twice a month meant that there was less planning time for project staff between sessions (resulting in less participatory planning), and that participants had less time between workshops to try out and gain experience with ideas or activities presented in the sessions.

dilemmas and challenges

There were both substantive and logistical challenges in implementing the training model. The former stemmed from Interns' expectations and internalized notions of education. The latter revolved around variability in individual and site-based backgrounds and needs, as well as factors relating to timing.

•*Uneven responses to a participatory, learner-centered approach:* In some cases, Interns' prior educational experiences caused them to be uncomfortable with a participatory approach - they expected to teach and be taught in the ways they themselves had learned, which may have been quite traditional. Thus, some wanted the training to provide them with techniques and tended to rely on mechanical approaches in their own teaching. The rate and extent of change from a teacher- to a learner-centered approach was uneven. In addition, even when participants seemed very engaged in workshop activities, the extent to which they transferred workshop ideas to their own teaching contexts was variable.

•*Impracticality of fixed observation, co-teaching and independent teaching cycles:* Although the original proposal stipulated three month segments of observing, co-teaching and teaching independently, this sequence did not correspond to the realities of participants' needs and backgrounds. They started with various degrees and kinds of experiences (some having already taught for many years or volunteered in Mentors' classes) and were ready to teach at different points (some needing minimal observation time and others being reluctant to teach independently even after six months in a Mentor's class).

•*The multi-faceted demands of becoming a teacher:* The transition to teaching involves changes on many fronts for Interns - becoming comfortable with the role of teacher, revising their own notions of education, learning to implement teaching processes, becoming familiar with resources, generating materials and lesson-plans, etc. The rate at which Interns are ready to take on new responsibilities is variable and uneven, which may cause logistical problems or tensions between Interns.

•*Coordinating conflicting scheduling demands of participants and addressing training needs:* It was difficult to balance participants' needs with training needs (scheduling adequate time for workshops and coordinating their various schedules in terms of day of the week and time of workshops). Likewise, scheduling was a recurring problem for site meetings because of Interns' limited hours and full time jobs.

> ***Sometimes I felt like people... didn't have a chance to explain their opinion, to talk about what they would like to discuss. Sometimes we spent too much time on the agenda. Yes, we always tried our best to fit their demands into the agenda,.. but we didn't solve this problem. If the workshop is two hours, we should give one hour for them to talk... I think, if we had a chance to do it again, we should allocate more time to the Interns than to the agenda.***
>
> Julio Midy, Mentor (HMSC)

******Balancing 'covering' the training agenda with allowing for spontaneous sharing:* At times, due to time pressure, we tried to pack too much into workshops, resulting in inadequate time for unanticipated dialogue and sharing among Interns.

recommend-ations

**Training and practice should include specific exploration of mechanical approaches to literacy as a basis for comparison with participatory approaches:* One way to address discomfort with participatory models is to invite Interns to try teaching both ways and to compare results. Promoting only one approach without evaluating the other may not be effective in demonstrating their differences.

**Training should include explicit strategies to support the transition from workshops to classroom practice:* Workshops themselves should incorporate planning time so that participants can explore how they may want to apply what they have learned. Site-based follow-up to workshops should be a regular part of training, including: structured discussions of workshops at site meetings, site-based sessions dealing with site-specific issues, and multiple opportunities for peer observation.

**The transition from training to teaching should to be flexible and context specific:* Because Interns come with different backgrounds and develop at various rates, their responsibilities should be increased as each is ready for them, rather than according to a pre-determined timeline. In place of a uniform ten-month cycle divided into three segments of observation, supervised co-teaching, and independent teaching, Interns should assume greater responsibilities as they are ready and comfortable with them (and in accordance with site needs).

* *Adequate time should be allowed for training:* At least a year (and preferably more) should be allowed for training; each session should be long enough to allow for dialogue and sharing. Scheduling should balance participants' and project needs..

Regarding participatory literacy instruction...

(related to Objective #5, 6)

Participatory literacy instruction and curriculum development is a particularly powerful model for newly literate adults because it connects their life concerns with literacy acquisition. It allows learners to move relatively quickly toward using and producing texts for their own purposes; as they use literacy to address their concerns, literacy becomes socially significant in family and community life.

findings

**Participatory curriculum development is a powerful model for adult learners:* Work in our project suggests that a participatory approach is appropriate for adult literacy and ESL students: very often, they are immersed in the struggles of adjusting to a new culture, separation from families, preoccupation with the political situation in the home countries, trying to find work, etc. Rather than seeing these preoccupations as obstacles to learning, the participatory approach allows learners to focus on them as part of learning. Because the acquisition of skills is contextualized, they may be less frustrated with limitations of memory, and more engaged with content. The participatory approach allows them to draw on their own experiences, contribute to their own learning, use literacy to accomplish their own purposes, and explore issues of importance to them.

> ***The students were evaluating the class last night and comparing places they had studied in the past. They were talking about particular textbooks that they had used; at one point, they said, "The nice thing about this program is that people are more important than books are." The curriculum has taken that power of making the person really important, as opposed to just the written word.***
>
> Ana Zambrano, Mentor, JMCS

**Meaning-based instruction facilitates literacy acquisition:* Work with our classes confirms studies which find that when the emphasis on learning focuses on meaning rather than form, learning is facilitated. Most beginning students in our classes who knew only a few letters of the alphabet when they enrolled were able to write sentences about pictures, journal entries, language experience stories, letters to relatives, etc. and to read authentic texts after relatively short periods of time.

dilemmas and challenges

A participatory approach is time-consuming and requires skill to implement. In addition, the lack of readily available materials to use as resources intensifies the challenge. These challenges demand substantial preparation time and support.

•The time-consuming nature of participatory curriculum development: The strengths of a participatory approach are also what makes it particularly challenging; precisely because the curriculum is tailored to each group, and emerges from a particular context, its implementation demands a great deal of time and skill. For people who are just learning to teach, this can be especially challenging.

•The lack of resources and materials: Since participatory curriculum development and a socially-oriented approach to adult literacy instruction is relatively new, there are few available support materials, particularly for native language literacy instruction. In addition to not being text-driven, this approach is labor-intensive in terms of finding or creating materials. Materials which are appropriate both in terms of linguistic accessibility and in terms of engaging content are few and far between.

•The inadequacy of preparation time and support: As Interns took on increasingly greater teaching responsibilities, they had less meeting time (since their paid time was fixed). They needed additional time, not only to prepare classes, but to discuss how to implement a participatory approach and to develop materials.

recommendations

•Training opportunities for participatory curriculum development need to be expanded so that it can become more widely implemented in adult education programs. While participatory curriculum development is a powerful approach to teaching adult literacy, there is relatively little ongoing teacher preparation available for it. TESOL programs should institutionalize course offerings for prospective teachers to prepare them for the influx of adult learners with little prior educational background.

•Teachers should be provided support and paid time for participatory curriculum development. Teacher-sharing meetings should become institutionalized as a regular part of job descriptions. In addition, teachers should be adequately paid for planning and materials-preparation time. Further recommendations regarding materials development and curriculum support are elaborated in the section on L1 literacy below.

Regarding first language literacy...

(related to Objectives #5, 6)

Our project indicated that provision of L1 literacy services addresses the needs of previously unserved populations, is effective in developing the basis for ESL acquisition for adults who are minimally literate in their L1, and contributes to community development.

findings

**L1 literacy provision addresses the needs of previously underserved or unserved learners:* Sites in our project found that offering native language literacy instruction allowed the sites to serve students that they had not been able to serve before. Learners had often quit other programs because their needs were not met or had never attended adult education classes before because they were intimidated by their own lack of prior schooling/literacy.

**L1 instruction is critical for the transition to ESL:* The project demonstrated that students with minimal L1 literacy can, after six months to a year of L1 literacy instruction, successfully make the transition to beginning ESL. We found that a bilingual transitional ESL class can be a significant support for this transition. It is critical to stress, however, that there may be a great deal of individual variation in the actual amount of time needed in L1 literacy classes; the rate of literacy acquisition and readiness for ESL depends on a range of background factors including the learner's prior educational experience, age, exposure to non-L1 communities, etc.

**L1 literacy can contribute to individual and community development:* L1 literacy acquisition allowed learners to meet many personal goals (ability to write letters to family members, use literacy at work, participate in community organizations, etc.), as well as gain an increased sense of self-confidence and independence. At the same time, it enhanced the sense of community cultural pride and enabled learners to become more active in addressing community issues. Through the context of L1 literacy classes, participants were able to engage in dialogue about socially significant issues in their own lives (eg. political developments in Haiti, workplace rights, AIDS) which they would not have been able to address in ESL classes (due to language limitations). Through this meaningful contextualization of literacy acquisition, they were able to become active participants in dialogue, develop critical thinking skills, and link their classwork to issues outside the classroom.

dilemmas and challenges

Precisely because the L1 literacy classes were so successful, new challenges emerged: As beginning students progressed, there were demands for additional courses and spaces in existing courses; in addition, expanded resources to support the proliferation of courses and increased numbers of students were required; further the project entailed additional administrative responsibilities for the sites which were not adequately supported by the project itself.

**The need for additional course offerings:* As students came closer to being ready for ESL, transitional bilingual ESL classes became necessary to bridge their L1 and L2 learning experiences. Thus, the project engendered the proliferation of classes (beginning and advanced L1 literacy, transitional bilingual ESL). Once L1 literacy students were ready for beginning ESL classes, existing classes had to accommodate them in addition to the students already on waiting lists. The result, in many cases, was a logjam or bottleneck. In addition, rather than reducing the waiting lists, the program was so successful that the waiting list actually increased as more and more students realized that their educational needs could now be met.

**The lack of ongoing support for L1 literacy and its spin-offs:* Although the sites were able to initiate a number of new classes during the project, finding support for this proliferation of classes once it ended was a challenge. In addition, there were not enough spaces for literacy students once they became ready for beginning ESL classes. Thus a whole new set of demands for the site was triggered by the project which the project itself did not address. The political climate is such that funding for L1 literacy classes is an uphill battle: the priority placed on quick job placements means that it can be difficult to find support for the lowest level students (who take longest to be employable).

**The increased administrative burden for the sites:* Institutionalizing the L1 literacy components at the sites entailed additional administrative responsibilities; however, since the project was primarily a training project (rather than a service delivery project), it was not always clear into whose domain these responsibilities fell. While there were substantial administrative tasks accompanying the additional services, there was no provision for funding this administration of services in the grant.

**Lack of materials and support for L1 literacy curriculum development:* Where ESL teachers may be able to draw on existing materials, integrating them into a participatory process, L1 teachers often have few resources to guide them. Existing materials are few and far between, and often not geared to a U.S. context.

recommendations

*****_L1 literacy instruction should become a regular, institutionalized option in adult education settings:_ The work of our project suggests that it is critical to ensure the provision of L1 literacy services for adult immigrants and refugees with limited prior educational experience. Without it, these adults will have little chance of accessing ESL services and the accompanying benefits in terms of employment, community and family participation. At the same time, however, service delivery models need to be flexible and tailored to the changing needs of sites: this means that there may be different course offerings and schedules at each site, depending on circumstances, and that the offerings may change over time within a site as student and community needs change, the number of students ready for ESL increases, etc.

**Funding for L1 literacy should be increased and institutionalized:* Pilot or demonstration programs can only be as successful as their follow-up. Policy makers must be committed not only to supporting innovative pilot projects, but to supporting their continuation. The stability of programming is necessary not just from an institutional perspective, but also for the sake of students: unless there is continuity of service provision, the gains that they make in literacy classes will be lost. In addition, stability and continuity of programming is necessary for research purposes: without long-term services, it will be impossible to seriously evaluate the impact of various instructional options.

**Site-based Curriculum Specialists should be hired for L1 literacy programs:* While all sites would benefit greatly from having site-based Curriculum Specialists who could assist in materials collection and development, they are particularly important in L1 literacy programs where few existing materials and resources are available. One of the responsibilities of Curriculum Specialists should be to develop Curriculum Tool Kits which include teacher- and learner-generated materials as well as authentic materials on a variety of topics; these Tool Kits can then become resources from which new (and experienced) teachers can draw. Once a greater body of knowledge/ materials is available, the role of curriculum specialist may become less necessary.

**Funding should be allocated for native language curriculum development:* Projects to develop curricula and materials for key languages with large non-literate adult populations in the U.S. (eg. Haitian Creole, Spanish, Vietnamese, Hmong, etc.) are necessary to provide teachers with resources. Each teacher cannot be expected to generate his/her materials from scratch for L1 literacy programs.

Regarding family literacy...

(related to Objectives #2, 4, 5)

Our project indicated that an approach to adult literacy instruction, in which learners' needs and concerns guide curriculum development, can result in an enhanced role for literacy in family life. A broad approach to family literacy which defines it to mean using literacy to address family concerns and strengthen adults' ability to care for their families, is more effective than a narrow, prescriptive approach which focuses on parent-child interactions around literacy.

findings

> ***Family literacy is teaching parents to fill out money orders, not just read to their kids.***
>
> Felipe Vaquerano, Intern (HMSC), Mentor (HCC)

•*By focusing on their own literacy and ESL acquisition, adults are enhancing the role of literacy in family life:* As adults develop their own capacity to use literacy and English, they are increasingly able to address family needs and strengthen family ties. Frequently, their goal was to become increasingly independent of their children and able to manage without them (rather than to read to children or help them with homework). In our project, participants used literacy and English to communicate with family members outside the U.S., to find jobs, to secure services for their children, to become more active in their communities, and to discuss difficult topics with their children (eg. sexuality). Thus, literacy became socially significant in family and community life, embodying the concept of family literacy in its truest sense.

> ***At least my kids know that I know how to read now.***
>
> adult learner, HCC Spanish literacy class

•*The development of adults' literacy and English proficiency has important consequences for family dynamics and parental confidence:* As participants in our project became increasingly proficient in ESL or literacy, they relied on their children less, freeing the children up to pursue their own development, as well as enhancing the parents' role within the family. By becoming less dependent on children, parents strengthened family ties and gained self respect.

Exploring family literacy issues as curriculum content is more effective if it comes from the participants rather than being imposed by teachers/trainers: Students may resist teacher-initiated lessons focusing on family literacy practices, while they respond positively if similar topics emerge through dialogue. Likewise, if trainers impose family literacy as their own agenda, they may be met with resistance or disinterest, whereas the topic may be compelling for Interns if it they bring it up themselves.

> ***Family literacy is not a week, a label, a lesson; it's a concept that's part of everything we do.***
>
> Ana Zambrano, Mentor (JMCS)

dilemmas and challenges

Tensions between grant and participant priorities: Because the grant included family literacy training as one of its goals, staff felt at times that we were not focused enough on family literacy content. At the same time, our adherence to participatory principles meant that we did not want to impose the topic if it was not a priority for Interns. It was through discussion of the real meaning of family literacy that we came to see that this was a false contradiction: in fact, as Interns were promoting learners' ability to use literacy to address their own and their families' needs, they were promoting family literacy. we didn't have to have a session labeled 'family literacy' to be doing family literacy training. We were doing it on an ongoing basis.

recommendations

Family literacy must be defined broadly to include all the ways that literacy is used to address family concerns and strengthen family life: Programs which focus narrowly on parents reading to children or helping them with homework miss the essence of family literacy - the ability to use literacy to take care of one's family. Rather than defining it as a particular set of behaviors, activities, or family interactions, family literacy should include any literacy practices which enable adults to take on the struggles of everyday living.

Training in family literacy must include a focus on participatory curriculum development so that adults' own concerns can drive instruction. Basing training on the above definition of 'family literacy' entails focusing on eliciting participants' concerns and finding out what they need literacy for in their own lives. Thus, family literacy training should be integrated rather than only limited to particular sessions.

Regarding collaboration and dissemination...

(related to Objectives #6, 7)

One of the positive and unexpected outcomes of the project was the cross-fertilization that occurred as a result of collaboration between sites. This was a benefit for participating teachers, administrators, and for the sites themselves. Further, dissemination tasks enhanced participants' skills and confidence, as they documented and presented their findings to colleagues.

findings

**Collaboration gave participants the chance to work with colleagues from other programs on substantive (not just bureaucratic) issues:* Whereas site representatives usually only have the chance to meet with each other to discuss administrative issues (eg. to hear about guidelines for proposals, etc.), this collaboration provided an ongoing context for dialogue about programming, curriculum development, long-term planning and policy priorities. Mentors and Interns particularly benefitted from hearing about issues that other sites were addressing, learning about other cultures, and utilizing each other as resources for their own teaching. ESL teachers from Latin America, for example, drew on their Haitian colleagues' knowledge to better understand their Haitian students.

**The participatory nature of project administration enhanced the collaboration:* Internally, in terms of staff decision-making and project administration, the fact that university and site personnel worked together in a participatory way supported the development of project staff. The guiding principle for project functioning - 'collaboration without control' - promoted the sites' sense of ownership and control in most cases.

**Mentor and Intern participation in dissemination of information about the project enhanced their skills and contributed to the diversification of the field:* Our goal in dissemination was that the process itself would contribute to participants' sense of ownership of the their own work, as well as their increasing skills and confidence. Thus, most dissemination was participatory, with Intern and Mentor involvement in documenting and presenting our work. Further, their participation at professional conferences promoted diversity within the profession; their insights and perspectives made important contributions to the knowledge base of the field.

dilemmas and challenges

The dual administrative structure of the project yielded tensions at certain times. In some cases, the needs of the sites came into conflict with the aims of the project, and the Mentors were caught between these conflicting demands. In addition, service needs and dissemination sometimes conflicted with each other because of limited time and resources.

•Lack of clarity regarding responsibility for added administrative requirements of new components: In sites where the project funded a new component, there was some uncertainty over who was responsible for administrative tasks associated with it. Mentors faced various challenges because of the duality of their roles as both project and site staff.

•Conflict between service and documentation/dissemination demands: While, on the one hand, we wanted everyone to participate in dissemination (especially in writing about their own work for this report), the reality was that Mentors' time was limited; they felt that limited resources should be directed toward providing services for students.

recommendations

•Opportunities for networking between sites should be enhanced: Collaboration and networking are powerful ways to address shared concerns and push forward the knowledge base of the field. They can help to overcome the 're-inventing the wheel' syndrome and allow for the pooling of resources and experiences. In the case of pioneering work (such as native language literacy), the need for a forum for dialogue is all the greater; funding must be allocated not only to support local collaborations, but to support national conferences where native language adult literacy practitioners can meet to discuss their work. This sharing of ideas can go a long way toward building the knowledge base in adult ESL and L1 literacy.

•Administration of site-based project responsibilities should be clearly delineated: Job descriptions of site-based Mentors should include participation in site meetings to ensure adequate communication between the project and the site. Paid time to administer services funded by the project should be included in the job description of a site staff member.

What's next?

> *This project is like a flower.*
> *We have planted the seed,*
> *the flower is starting to grow,*
> *and now we are cutting it.*
>
> Roberto Flores, Intern (HCC)

As we confront dramatic changes in the demographics for the twenty-first century, we need to find equally dramatic new ways to address the increased demands for adult literacy and ESL provision. Hopefully, this report has shown that the 'from the community - to the community' model has the potential to be one such approach. It is a model that promotes leadership from within language minority communities, provides effective services for underserved populations, and opens career opportunities for immigrants and refugees. In many ways, the work of the project exemplifies the community service Internship model being promoted by the current administration in Washington.

Yet, as Ana said, ***"This model has the potential to be a powerful model, but it can only work if it is adequately supported."*** Unfortunately, our experience has not been entirely positive as we have attempted to continue the work of the project beyond the grant period. The single biggest obstacle, not only to our efforts, but across the board in literacy provision for adult immigrants and refugees, is inadequate and unstable funding. While federal agencies encourage providers to seek state funding, the states are limited by budget cutbacks. Competition for scarce resources pits agencies against each other, undermining collaboration between organizations which should be working toward similar goals. In our case, concerted fund-raising efforts to continue the work of the CTAFL have consumed enormous amounts of time by community-based organizations and have yielded uneven results. The CBO's have had to patch together small pieces of funding from a variety of sources to keep classes going. Despite these herculean efforts, the number of classes has been cut back at two of the sites and completely eliminated at the third. The training and collaboration aspects of the project are also no longer in place. While there are other local and state training opportunities, none focus on training community people to teach in their own communities.

In a political climate where a great deal of lip service is paid to cultural diversity and to 'breaking the cycle of illiteracy,' obstacles to institutionalizing services for immigrants and refugees continue to be enormous, and efforts to secure funding are so demanding that they take away from the actual delivery of services. The constant cycle of developing innovative and effective projects, attempting to get them institutionalized or watch them go out of existence, only to be replaced by new innovative projects which may suffer the same fate, does little to encourage practitioners or those in need of services. While it is clearly important to promote innovative demonstration projects, it is equally important to make commitments to their institutionalization. Our hope is that this Guidebook will contribute to securing stable, ongoing support for the training and hiring of community literacy teachers as well as for native language literacy services and participatory curriculum development projects.

We want to end this Guidebook with a reminder of the power of this model - a poem written by several Interns from the JMCS expressing what the project meant to them.

"THANK YOU"

As time passes by and life goes on,
As long as we are alive,
As long as our goals seem to be hidden,
As long as our hopes are not finished,
We can struggle to survive.

As long as we stay awake
To see Today's sunset and Tomorrow's
sunrise,
As long as we remember what we've done
And what we want to do,
We can struggle to survive.

As long as there is someone to hold on,
As long as we can get up from a failure,
As long as somebody believes in us,
As long as we can show who we are,
We can struggle to survive.

As long as people like you exist
It is going to be difficult to fall;
Because you're the person we can count on
To encourage us to struggle to survive.

Thank you for supporting us,
In our long-long walk,
For sharing your knowledge with us
For being who you are.

Thank you again and good luck!

Ediana,Estela,(Felipe), Laudize

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Appendices

A. Letter welcoming Interns to the project

B. Samples of minutes and handouts from training workshops

   1. Workshop #3: Classroom observation

      a. Facilitators' agenda
      b. Handout pack
      c. Minutes

   2. Workshop #5: Making codes

   3. Workshop #12: Dialogue journals

C. Sample evaluation tools

   1. Possible questions for student interviews

   2. Checklist formats for assessment of students

Appendix A

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
University of Massachusetts - Boston
100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, Massachusetts 02125 - 3393

Jan. 15, 1993

Dear

Welcome to the Community Training for Adult and Family Literacy Project! We are excited that you will be participating as an intern in this project and hope that our work together will be productive for everyone! The rest of this letter will answer some questions you may have about the project.

Who is involved in this project?	As you may know, the project is a collaboration between three adult education centers - the Jackson- Mann Community School in Allston, the Haitian Multi-Service Center in Dorchester, and the Harborside Community Center in East Boston; in addition, the Boston Adult Literacy Fund (directed by Joanne Arnaud) receives and administers the funding for the project, and Elsa Auerbach, a University of Massachusetts professor is the Coordinator of the project. There will be two interns and a mentor teacher at each site. The mentors are Ana Zambrano, Julio Midy and Felipe Vaquerano.
Why are we doing this project? What are its goals?	Our goal is to provide training so that, as members of the communities of the learners at participating sites, you can become teachers of ESL or literacy in your own communities. Because of your knowledge of the backgrounds, experiences and, in some cases, cultures and languages of the learners, we feel that you bring special strengths to teaching. We also hope that by documenting what we do in this project and publicizing it, it will become a model for other programs around the country, giving others like yourselves the possibility to participate in similar training and teaching.

How is this project funded?	Funding for this project comes mainly from the National Institute for Literacy, a federal government agency which is interested in promoting model adult literacy programs. The funding for providing training and writing a project report is for one year.
How long will the training last?	The training itself (your work as interns) will last until the end of the summer cycle at your site.
What will we do in the project?	Your work will include time in the classroom, meeting and preparation time at the site, and training time at UMass. If you have not taught before, you will begin by observing the mentor in his/her class. Gradually, as you become more comfortable, you will take on more teaching responsibility until you feel ready to teach independently or with another intern. If you are already teaching independently, you will have the chance to observe others teach. The mentor teacher will coordinate the work of the project at your site, work with you in the classroom, help you with planning and provide guidance.
How many hours will we work and how will they be divided?	Most of you will work 10 hours a week. Your specific hours and work schedule will be worked out at the sites. Of these, 8 hours will be teaching time (in class or preparing for class); 2 hours each week will be meeting time, alternating between meeting at the site one week and meeting at UMass the next. The site meetings will be scheduled by the mentor.
What will happen in the site meetings?	In the site meetings you will discuss what you do in the classroom, reactions to the training meetings, site business and any other issues you want to talk about.
When and where will the training meetings take place?	The training meetings will take place every other Friday (alternate Fridays) from 3:00 to 5:00 pm. The schedule for meetings through May is: **Jan. 29, Feb. 12, Feb. 26, Mar. 12, Mar. 26, Apr. 2 (because Apr. 9 is a holiday), Apr. 23, May 7, May 21.** For the first several months, they will be at UMass in the Wheately Building, 1st floor, room 040 (W-1-040); after that, we will decide if we want to move them to the sites. Everyone must attend these meetings.

What will happen in the training meetings?

In these meetings, we will address specific topics such as finding out about students'goals, learning from observation, integrating math with literacy, assessing student progress, etc. You will have a chance to participate in choosing topics. The meetings will be organized as workshops, not lectures so that everyone will participate with ideas and experiences; you will have the chance to try out some of the activities you may use in teaching. The goal of the training is not to tell you what to do in class or to teach you a specific methodology (although you will learn some methods). Rather, it is to help you develop your ideas about teaching and learn to develop lessons and materials that meet the needs of your students. *We believe that teaching is an art, not a science: we will provide the paint and brushes, but you must paint the pictures!*

What will happen at the end of the project?

At the end of the project, you will receive a certificate stating that you have completed the training. In addition, each of the sites will give priority consideration to project participants for future job openings. Students who are interested in applying to UMass will be assisted in this process.

You probably have other questions about the project. We'll talk about them at the site meetings and the first training meeting.

Again, welcome to the project! We look forward to seeing you on Friday, Jan. 29th, at UMass.

Sincerely,

Elsa Auerbach, Project Coordinator
Phone: 287-5763

Appendix B1a - Facilitators' Agenda

OBSERVATION WORKSHOP

Workshop #3: Agenda

3:00 - 3:20 **Report back** from week with guided questions

One person tell us about one lesson from the past two weeks:
If I were a **fly on the wall**, what would I have seen? First just describe **what happened**:

What was the theme/content of the lesson?
What activities did you do?
What happened when you did them?
What were students' reactions? Any interesting discussion?

Now tell us **what you think about it.**
If I were inside your head, what would I see?

What do you think you did well?
Did you feel uncomfortable about anything?
Did anything unexpected happen?
Were there any problems?
Did any questions arise for you?
Why did it happen the way it did?
What do you want to know about your own teaching?

Was anyone else in the room? Did you see anything not mentioned?

3:20 - 3:40 **Overview of observation**

Last session: It was interesting to me that only one group actually used what we did in the workshop in their action plan. At first, I was concerned, but then Ana said, people do what fits with their context and what they're ready to do.

Dilemma: On the one hand, you wanting to be given very concrete ideas for what to do in the classroom; on the other, you can't just transplant an idea if it doesn't fit (Jean-Louis' students already knew each other so it wasn't useful to do profile; for JMCS - the agenda was Valentine's day; for Estela, what Roberto demonstrated was most useful - not what I introduced). You have to start with your own context and learn by observing, sharing ideas, not by someone else telling you what to do. *Very often the real stories of what people do in their classrooms are what you learn most from.* Workshops are only ONE context for learning: the classroom itself is where you learn the most.

TODAY: How to learn from observing other people and observing yourself.Focus NOT on **techniques**, but on **processes**

The first question is WHY do it?
If you're being observed, how do you feel?
If you're observing someone, how do you feel?

If an experienced teacher observes a less experienced teacher, the danger is that it becomes a way of judging, telling someone what to do, HELPING them. If an inexperienced teacher observes an experienced one, the danger is that the experienced teacher will be seen as the expert. Need to have a way of LOOKING and a way of TALKING about what you see so that BOTH people learn, no one is evaluated.

PURPOSE: NOT to evaluate or help or prescribe solutions or tell someone how to do something better.

Rather: to develop a way of thinking and talking about teaching. So the person being observed and the observer can learn together. NOT one is observing and judging the other.

PRINCIPLES:

1. Everybody learns; nobody evaluates.
2. Describe, don't prescribe.
3. Separate out what is happening from how you feel about it. Collect data (describe); then analyze it (add reflections).
4. Leave control in the hands of the person being observed.
    Let them decide what to focus on; the observer acts like a mirror wo the teacher can see self differently.
    Let them generate their own solutions/alternatives. Don't tell them what they can do better.

PROCESS: How to do it: GRID

Either self-observation (with tape) OR peer observation

Either you go in with an open mind and just describe what you see and then think about it afterwards OR you can look for something particular.

3:40 - 3:50 Peer observation: Talking about observations and giving feedback

The teacher and observer talk together before and after class; the teacher always starts. The teacher determines what the focus should be.

Before:
The teacher tells the observer what he/she hopes to accomplish and how
The teacher tells the observer what he/she wants the observer to pay attention to -what data should be collected.

After:

The teacher starts by telling how he/she feels about the lesson.
The teacher remembers specific points (what happened).
The observer gives data and asks questions:
    I noticed that.... Why do you think that happened?
    What were you thinking when....
    How did you feel when...
The teacher talks about why he/she thinks things happened as they did.
Summarize what you learned or might do differently.

3:50 - 4:10 Video
TECHNIQUE #1: open-ended observation
1. Describe: Take notes on what you see
2. Reflect:
    If you were the teacher, what might you say about your own lesson?
    If you were the observer, what questions might you ask?

4:10 - 4:30 TECHNIQUE #2: focused observation
Look at how corrections are done. Half the group just observes the way corrections are handled. Half the group uses the checklist.
1. What did you notice that you didn't notice when you watched the first time?
2. Describe how the teacher handled corrections.
3. Use corrections checklist.
4. What did you notice by using the checklist that you might not have noticed otherwise?

4:30 - 4:45 Applying this to your own teaching: What do you want to learn about in your own or someone else's teaching?

Generate two lists (whole group feedback)
What I felt comfortable about in my teaching
Something I want to work on/learn about in my teaching

Focused observation:
Go over the kinds of things that you can observe for in focused observation: (handout pack)

4:45 - 4:50 Make a plan - Who and when you'll observe; set up a conference to discuss what you want to observe for.

Suggestion: One class -double entry journal
One focused observation

4:50 - 5:00 Evaluation (feedback from Pam?)

APPENDIX B1b HANDOUTS

Community Training for Adult and Family Literacy Project

Workshop #3: Classroom observation

Feb. 26, 1993

3:00 - 3:20 **Feedback** from past weeks

3:20 - 3:50 **Presentation** on classroom observation

Why do classroom observation
How to do classroom observation
  *principles of observing
  *formats and techniques for observing
    self-observation and peer observation
    open observation and focused observation
How to talk about observations and give feedback

3:50 - 4:30 **Video**: Practicing observation

4:30 - 4:50 **Action planning**
What do you want to know about your teaching?
Ideas for focused observation

4:50 - 5:00 **Evaluation**

SOME KEY PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE OBSERVATION:

1. Everybody learns; nobody evaluates.
2. Describe, don't prescribe.
3. Separate out what is happening from how you feel about it. Collect data (describe); then analyze it (add reflections).
4. Leave control in the hands of the person being observed.
   Let them decide what to focus on; the observer acts like a mirror so the teacher can see him/herself differently.
   Let them generate their own solutions/alternatives. Don't tell them what they can do better.

TYPES OF OBSERVATION

	Open	Focused
PEER		
SELF		

Open observation: In this case, the observer just describes (or tapes) what he or she sees for a specified amount of time. There are no guiding questions or expectations. Afterwards, the observer and/or the teacher go back over the description or the tape and discuss it.

The observer can choose one or two HOT moments to write about, These can be written in the form of a story or an anecdote which first describes what happened and then explores why, asks questions, etc. From this kind of open observation, questions for more focused observation might emerge.

Focused observation: In this case, the observer is looking at a particular aspect of what is happening. He/she is asking a question and describing what happens in order to answer the question. You can do focused observation to explore a problem or question that emerges from a particular lesson or a more general concern about teaching. When doing focused observation, the observer limits his/her attention to a specific topic and collects data just about that area. The starting point for doing focused observation is figuring out *what questions you have about your own teaching?*

HOW TO TALK ABOUT OBSERVATION AND GIVE FEEDBACK

The teacher and observer talk together before and after class.
The person being observed always starts.
The person being observed determines what the focus should be.

Before the class:

The person being observed should:	*The observer should:*
1. Tell the observer what you hope to accomplish and how you will do it. What's your plan for the day? What are you trying to do?	1. Ask the teacher what he/she hopes to accomplish. Clarify what he/she expects. Ask the teacher: What do you want to do today? Why? How will you do it?
2. If it's a focused observation, tell the observer what you want him/her to pay attention to or take notes about. What are you concerned about? Give him/her a checklist if you want to.	2. Clarify the purposes of the observation. Ask: What do you want me to pay attention to or look for? Do you want me to use a checklist?

During the class: The observer takes notes about whatever has been agreed on before class. Sometimes this means taking notes about **what people are doing** as well as what is being said.

After the class:

The person being observed should:	*The observer should:*
1. Tell the observer how you feel about the lesson. How did you feel about what happened?	1. Clarify the teacher's feelings about the lesson. Ask: How did you feel when...
2. Talk about specific points during the lesson that stand out in your mind. What particular moments do you remember? Why? What do you think about them?	2. Ask about specific points: Ask: What were you thinking when... Why do you think it happened that way?
3. Ask the observer what he/she noticed about the points being observed.	3. Give data about things you observed when asked: I noticed that...
4. Talk about anything unexpected.	4. Ask about the teacher's interpretation of anything unexpected. Ask: Why do you think that happened?
5. Summarize what you learned or might do differently. Talk about new questions you have or new things you want to focus on.	5. Ask the teacher to summarize what he/she learned or might do next. Ask: What do you think you got out of this? What new questions do you have? What might you try next?

Reflections (What do you think about what happened?)	Observations (What happened?)
How did the lesson differ from your expectations? Why do you think it turned out as it did? What are some issues or concerns that arose for you as a teacher while you were doing this lesson? What new questions do you have? How might you follow up on this lesson?	What did the class do? What was the topic? Where did it come from? What were the activities? Who said what to whom? How did students react to them? What was the discussion that emerged? What tensions were there? What new issues/topics emerged?

Feedback and corrections

1. Who does the correcting in this lesson?
   - teacher
   - students correct each other (peer correction)
   - students correct themselves (self correction)

2. Which errors does the teacher respond to?
   - all errors
   - errors that are repeated frequently
   - only errors that affect understanding/meaning
   - only one's that relate to the lesson focus (eg. past tense errors if it's a lesson focusing on past tense)
   - none

3. When does the teacher correct?
   - as soon as the error is made (interrupting the student)
   - after the student finishes talking
   - later in the lesson
   - at another time

4. How does the teacher respond?
   - by making a sign or giving a cue
   - by correcting the student
   - by modeling the corrected form
   - by waiting
   - by inviting peer correction
   - by encouraging self-correction

In **writing** activities, which errors does the teacher respond to?
- mechanical errors:
  - spelling
  - punctuation
  - grammar
- organizational problems
- unclear ideas

In **speaking** activities, which errors does the teacher respond to?
- pronounciation
- grammar
- unclear ideas
- voice quality

In **reading** activities, which errors does the teacher respond to?
- pronounciation
- skipped words
- getting stuck
- only errors that interfere with comprehension

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APPENDIX B1c - Workshop Minutes

Literacy Project Workshop #3 - Observation and Self-Observation Minutes 3/26/93

Feedback from past weeks: Teresa started by describing a lesson she had done about Valentine's Day. Elsa asked her questions first about exactly what had happened and how students reacted and then about how Teresa felt, whether there were any parts that surprised her or didn't go the way she expected. Teresa said there were a few places that were different from what she had planned: first, she asked students to come to the board to write the questions; second, she invited students to read the story instead of reading it to them. She said that she did this partly because she felt uncomfortable talking too much. She also said that she ran out of time. Elsa said that she was asking Teresa these questions because she was trying to find out Teresa's questions about her own teaching: by observing your own lesson and describing what happens, you can sometimes identify issues to follow up on in your own teaching. She said that it seemed that Teresa focused on three issues in her description:

changing the lesson plan
getting more student involvement or participation
timing

Why do observation or self-observation: Elsa said that we'll focus on observation as a way of learning about how to teach. On the one hand, in the project, we do workshops; on the other hand, people are trained through working with each other in the classroom. The focus today is on how do you learn from the work in the classroom. We'll bring this back to what we do in the workshops so that the workshops and the classroom work are more connected.

We talked about how we feel when we are observed. Estela said that she gets very nervous when someone watches her teach. Even if she does fine when she's by herself, she forgets what's she's doing when someone else is observing. This is because she feels like they're judging her, evaluating her teaching. Ana and Julio said that even if you're an experienced teacher, it can be uncomfortable be watched.

We then talked about how to change observation so it's not so threatening. Elsa went over some principles, including DESCRIBING without evaluating, and giving the control to the person who is being observed. The purpose of observation is to learn from your own teaching. The job of the observer is to mirror back what he/she sees, not to tell someone what they should be doing or could do better.

How to do observation: Elsa presented several contexts for observation. Either you can observe yourself or you can work with a partner, and observe each other. Either you can just describe what is happening and see what you notice (open observation) or you can focus on some particular question or aspect of teaching. Sometimes you can start by just describing a lesson (open) and from that find a question that you want to focus on next time.
In peer observation (with a partner), *talking about the class before and after it happens* is very important. In fact, Elsa said, *the purpose of observation in some*

ways is to give you an excuse to talk to each other about your teaching. Elsa and Ana modeled how to do this and we went over the handout which had examples of the kinds of questions the observer and person being observed might ask each other. Again, the point was leaving the control in the hands of the teacher. Some of the dialogue they modeled included:

Elsa: How did you feel about the lesson?
Ana: Some of the students were interested, but others looked bored.
E: What do you think caused this?
A: It seemed like the more educated ones knew this stuff. It was too easy for them.
E: Did you notice anything in particular?
A: Yes, (describing one student). What did you see?
E: When you asked about their own illnesses, everyone seemed interested.
A: What else? What could I do better next time?
E: What do you think? What do you think you could have done when X was bored?
A: I'm not sure. I want to pay attention to how I correct pronounciation next time.

Elsa pointed out that she tried to reflect Ana's questions back to her. Two issues came up during the discussion:

*At one point, in the modeling, Elsa asked Ana "What's the lesson plan?" and Julio pointed out that it's not always necessary to have a **lesson plan**. Elsa should have said, "What should I observe for?" and maybe asked whether there was a plan (instead of assuming there was one).

*When Ana said she wanted feedback about **correcting pronounciation**, Julio asked if she's concerned about her pronounciation as a non-native speaker of English. He said sometimes teachers are worried about this and think students need to have Americans as teachers.We talked about how people respond to students' questions about pronounciation since their own pronounciation isn't native. Estela said that she responds by telling students it doesn't matter, that they can decide which way they prefer because pronounciation varies. Felipe added that he says as long as you can make yourself understood it doesn't matter. You only correct pronounciation when it makes a real difference in being understood.

Focused observation: Elsa then went over the handout about focused observation, explaining that having questions ahead of time was sometimes helpful.

Taking notes: Elsa gave out journal books, explaining that you can take notes on the right hand side while you're observing - writing down what you see and then later go back and write your reflections on what you see.

Video tape: We looked at a tape of a language experience lesson. The first time through, people made general observations (open). The second time through, we went over the observation checklist for corrections and then watched the tape (focused). People noticed the following: The teacher doesn't correct directly. He lets others do it. He reads the story (modeling correct form) AFTER the students have done it. He lets the students work out the corrections themselves (waiting). He wrote the incorrect form on the board and then let students go back and change it.

Julio noted that we shouldn't see what this teacher did as a prescription for we should do: what you do as a teacher depends on the students' levels. You shouldn't think of what you see as 'perfect.'

Ana also said that it's important to take the context of a lesson into account when observing. You can't really understand what's going on in a lesson unless you know what happened before the lesson and why the lesson is being taught.

Elsa noted that observing a video is artificial because there's no chance to talk to the teacher before and after, and you don't know what led up to the lesson, who the students are, etc.

Planning for observation: We then got in groups to figure out a plan for doing observations at the sites. Each site group discussed whether to do self or peer evaluation, open or focused observation. Everyone decided to do peer observation:

JMCS: Teresa will observe Estelita and Ana; Estela will tell her what she wants her to focus on and she'll do open observation in Ana's class.
EB: They will rotate, everyone will observe each other. They will do focused observation but haven't decided the focus yet.
HMSC: Ernst and Jean-Louis will observe each other; Julio will observe each intern; Jean-Louis will observe Julio.

NEXT TIME: Everyone should use their black journal notebooks to take notes and come back with information they have gathered through observing. We'll use this in the next workshop. Hopefully, this kind of observing will become a regular thing that everyone do on a weekly basis; the packet "Find out how you teach" can give ideas for particular things to focus on in observing.

Estela presented her materials from the lesson on student profiles and showed how she followed up with work on families. She borrowed from Teresa and Roberto's format. The class went over *he is* and *she is* forms with vocabulary and then wrote their own stories about their families.

Next workshop: March 12, 3 pm at UMass; please bring your observation journals and any examples from lessons you did.

APPENDIX B2 - Minutes
Workshop on making codes

NIL Minutes, Workshop #~~7~~6, March 26, 1993

Meeting schedule: We voted on the meeting schedule for the next few weeks and decided to leave the schedule as it had originally been planned: Workshops on Fri. **April 2 and then on Fri. April 23** (nothing in between). In addition, we decided not to move the meeting times to once a month (because the project ends in July and this would not give us enough time for training) and to leave the workshops on Fridays (because several people cannot participate at all on Saturdays). This should not be a problem since everyone agreed to bimonthly Friday meetings as a condition of participation in the project.

Feedback about 'hot spots':

***Ana** started by telling about a class in which she gave students newsprint and asked them to sit in pairs and draw/make a picture without talking. Afterwards, they sat in small groups and discussed questions: *How did you feel while doing this? How did you come up with the picture and how did you agree on what to draw without using words?* Everyone was very involved and talked about how it felt to have to communicate without words, mentioning issues like the confusion that you feel when you're on a train and have to ask directions. Some said they liked communicating without words because they didn't have to worry about mistakes, etc.

***Teresa** said that an issue came up when they were doing the breast cancer curriculum; when a rubber model of a breast was passed around to demonstrate testing, a Brazilian woman started talking about Latin men being closed-minded. The class went off the lesson to a heated discussion about things like a man's reaction to his wife's mastectomy.

***Elsa** noted that in each case it seems that something very concrete triggered the hot spot: in one case, drawings and in the other, the rubber breast model. She also told a story about her own teaching when a Puerto Rican holiday triggered a debate between P.R. men and women about why so many P.R's live in Boston. In that case, the class wrote two stories, one from the men's perspective and one from the women's.

***Felipe** said that a student who had been absent came in excited because he had seen his ex-wife with another man, hit the man's car and then argued and fought. The rest of the class told stories of quarrels they had had and experiences with the court system. They told him that this kind of fighting was serious business and advised him to cool it.

***Ernst and Jean-Louis** said that they felt that their math class was a hot spot this week, because students were so excited about them. Jean-Louis used pictures and pieces of paper to demonstrate fractions. They talked about needing math for shopping. Julio said that an issue for Haitians is knowing how to negotiate the markets in the U.S. (bargaining, making change).

***Julio** said that a hot spot can come from right inside the class itself, between teacher and students; for example, when a teacher talks down to 'slow' learners and they get upset, feel oppressed and start to talk about ways they are equal to the teacher.

***Ana** said that a similar tension occured in her class around lesson content: even though the class decided as a group that they wanted to work on health care, one student didn't because her husband is a doctor so she is more priviledged than others in respect to health care. In this case, the issue is how to deal with one student who is vocal about not liking the lesson content.

The following hot spots came up through the discussion:

*not being able to communicate in public places (eg. the train)
*men's vs. women's attitudes (re: health care/mastectomy in this case)
*domestic conflict (man fighting with ex-wife's boyfriend); court system
*need for math (shopping)
*tensions between teachers and students
*tensions about curriculum content

Using issues for curriculum development: Elsa said that there were two kinds of issues in the list we had generated - issues that related to students' lives *outside of class* and issues that arose *inside the class* itself. In addition, there were issues that were very personal and loaded, like the issue of domestic violence as well as more general issues of getting along in a new culture. The important thing is to look at a hot spot and ask whether it represents a social issue - something that touches all the students - or ask whether there is an underlying issue behind it that relates to many students' experiences. In participatory education, the key is to listen for issues that are important for the whole group, develop them into something concrete which can be presented back to the students for dialogue and language/literacy work and then address the issue itself. The focus of this workshop is how to make an issue into something concrete which can be presented back to the group for reflection and discussion.

Skit by Ana and Felipe: Ana and Felipe acted out a conversation between a parent and child in which the child refused to speak Spanish with her mother. We discussed the skit. When Elsa asked if anyone had had a similar experience, everyone immediately said yes. There were various ideas about the causes of the tension: Teresa said that the schools teach children that only English is good; and that there are negative connotations to being identified as Spanish (or other groups). Roberto said that teen-aageres want to belong, they don't want to be different; Julio said that Haitians bring these feelings from their experience in Haiti where there is already a tension between French and Creole; in the U.S. even more negative feelings are projected onto them with the stigmas about boat people and HIV. So kids can internalize these negative feelings about their own culture.

Elsa then noted that this is an example of a code: it's an immediately familiar situation, which instantly evoked a reaction and related to participants' own experiences. The discussion itself moved from the immediate situation to some analysis of its underlying social causes - the attitudes generated through American schools, the politcal context, etc.

What's a code?: *We then went over the handout about codes and discussed their* characteristics - that they should be familiar, represent a real problem that everyone can identify with, evoke reactions, be complicated enough to represent various aspects of the problem and not contain a bias or solution. *It is also important that the code NOT represent the real story of someone in the class because this might be too embarrasing or personal.* For example, a student at the JMCS came to class upset one day because he had misunderstood some directions and made a mistake with some chemicals at work; his teacher then remembered the story of another student who had made a mistake when she first became a housekeeper (she had been told to put some food away, but instead she threw it away). The teacher used the old story as a code, which allowed everyone to share their stories; in this context, the student who had misused the chemicals was comfortable telling his story and saw that he wasn't the only one making this kind of mistake. The code depersonalized the process and allowed the group to generate solutions.

We went over various types of codes - pictures, skits, readings, movies, etc. Kennya described the movie El Norte as an example; Elsa said that there are many scenes which could be presented in themselves as codes (eg. when the woman first comes to an American home and doesn't know how to use the washing machine).

Making codes in groups: We broke into groups and made codes for the rest of the session. The codes were:

Fruits and vegetables

Teacher: We're going to talk about fruits and vegetables. what is this?
(shows a picture)

Russian: This is a picture.

Brazilian/Spanish: abacate - aguacate.

Haitian: Avocado.

Teacher: Yes, this is an avocado. Now is this a fruit or a vegetable?

Student #1: It's a vegetable.

Spanish: It's a food.

Brazilian: No, no, no - it's a fruit.

Wife: Remember, I am expecting you home early today. You have to watch the children because I am going to the movies tonight.

Husband: I can't come home early today because I have other plans.

The wife goes to the movies and leaves the children with the babysitter. The husband comes home and she is not there. When she arrives, the fight starts.

Religion

Setting: (In a class, a student brings the issue of religion, another student reacts to it.)

Rosa: Hi, I didn't see you at church last Sunday. What happened to you?

Carlos: I never go to church. What for anyway?

Rosa: What do you mean by that? "God is everything."

Carlos: (he laughs) Sure! Only for white people! Do you think there is a god for you too?

Rosa: Of course. God is for everyone. He creates us!

Carlos: So! How come white people get everything and we minorities don't get anything?

Rosa: It doesn't matter what people say! What really matters is that each one should look after their own souls... to go to Heaven!

Next time, we will discuss what to do with codes in class - how to use them to facilitate discussion and participation. Elsa suggested that people not try to use the codes yet (until we discuss how to use them).

For next week, everyone should:

- keep listening for hot spots
- try making other codes about issues that come up
- read the hand-outs about using codes.

APPENDIX BC - Minutes
Workshop on Dialogue Journals

NIL Workshop Minutes, July 16, 1993

Present: Julio, Felipe, Estelita, Jean Louis, Ernst, Roberto, Kennya, Elsa

Dialogue Journals

Eliciting experiences and questions about dialogue journals: Elsa started by asking whether anyone had tried doing anything with dialogue journals since last week. Estelita said that she had given her students the bluebooks and asked them to write about a topic that she chose. At first they were scared by the bluebooks because they thought it was an exam. She explained that the it was really for writing practice, that it would help to keep track of their writing. Felipe asked if they did the writing at class or at home. Julio said he has used journals too; students wrote about anything they wanted in the journals at first and when they were used to it, he gave them a topic. Felipe said he has also done journals at Harvard; he would write in a journal and the teacher would correct it and give a response. Estelita said that she knows what a journal is, but not what a dialogue journal is: is it a place where students write dialogues?

Elsa said that a number of important questions or issues about how to use dialogue journals had arisen from this discussion:

What are dialogue journals?
What's the purpose of doing them -to practice language? to keep track of progress? to find mistakes?
How should you introduce the process to students/ what should you say to them?
Should you give them a topic or have them write about whatever they want?
Should students do them at home or in class?
What should you with students' journals when you get them? correct mistakes? respond?

Dialogue journal exercise: Rather than discuss these questions directly, Elsa suggested that everyone try an exercise. She handed out bluebooks and invited everyone to write for a few minutes about whatever they're preoccupied about, about anything they're thinking about or whatever might have made it difficult for them to come to the workshop today.

After about five minutes, Elsa asked everyone to stop write and trade journals with someone else, read what they had written and respond to it, as though they were having a conversation in writing with that person. Felipe was reluctant to share what he had written, which pointed out a big mistake in Elsa's directions: she forgot to let people know that someone else would read what they had written! People switched with their partners again after about five minutes, and responded to the response; everyone did this one more time after this.

Discussion of the process: When the exchanges had been completed, Elsa asked everyone how they felt about the process. Some of the comments were:

-it's a place to express feelings that you might not otherwise express
-it's a way of following an idea and elaborating it
-it could be a way to have a more intimate dialogue with your students

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-it was fun
-how you feel about it depends on the content; it could be embarassing
-getting a response makes you want to keep going
-it's easy to write a response because you don't have to come up with an idea
-it might be easier for us, because we already know how to write
-it felt pressured because of time (not enough time)

In summarizing *why do it,* we decided that it is fun because it's real communication; you want to keep going because you're wrint about something real. The fact that someone is responding motivates you to want to write more. It's easier to write because there's already a context - it's for a real purpose. Since it's private, it allows for more personal/individual communication betweeen teacher and student.

But *what you say to students* (the directions) is very important. First, as Felipe said, you have to tell them that you will be reading it (and responding to what they write), but that it will be private between the two of you. Second, you should stress that the purpose is communication: It may be more effective to say that it's a way for the teacher to understand what you're thinking about (rather than saying it's for language practice or to improve your writing).

In terms of *whether you should give them a topic,* Estelita said you have to give students something concrete to write about or focus on (not leaving it too open) but not so specific that they feel it's an assignment. You have to give them a way to start. Estelita suggested telling them to write about the first thing that comes to mind. But if you tell them to write about a formal topic (eg. the elections/the weather, etc.) you may force them to write about something they're not interested in. Felipe said that he liked the idea of continuous writing back and forth rather than the having the teacher change the topic on a regular basis (he sometimes would ask students to write about something new each time they wrote in their journals but likes just following up on whatever has already been written).

In terms of *how to respond,* there were several suggestions. Elsa asked if anyone had responded to their partner's journal by correcting mistakes. No one had done this. Elsa asked why not: people said that they were resonding to what the person had said. It would be awkward to correct a peer and would make them feel bad. Elsa asked what would have happened if someone had corrected your writing. People said that they would have stopped writing, or written less and worried about mistakes. Elsa asked how people would respond to students' mistakes: would you correct their mistakes, especially since they often say they want corrections? Some of the responses were:

1. *Modeling the correct form:* Estelita said that with students, she wouldn't correct their mistakes, but her answer itself would be the correction (if a word was misspelled or a tense was wrong, her answer would have the correct form in it). Correcting would make them stop writing.

2. *Making corrections as a group:* Someone suggested making the students' errors into a lesson for the whole group to work on. But, in this case, privacy and embarassment are issues: students might not want others to see what they had written.

3. *Teach a lesson about common mistakes:* You could note particular points that students had trouble with and teach a lesson about those points (without using actual examples from anyone's work). You could use examples that are similar and then ask students to go back to their own journals and make their own corrections.

Responding exercise: Elsa asked Jean Louis to read and translate a journal entry about Thanksgiving that had been written by a Creole literacy student. Then everyone wrote their own response to that entry. We shared what we had written. There were several kinds of response in our group:

1. *Reflecting back:* Some people wrote back saying they were glad the person had a good holiday, etc., rephrasing the students' ideas to indicate they understood them.

2. *Asking questions:* Some people also asked some questions about what the student had written, to get more elaboration on some of the points.

3. *Words of wisdom:* Some people gave advice or suggestions to help the person manage.

4. *Introducing a new issue:* Some people picked up on something the person had said and developed a new issue from it (in this case, getting into who helps with the housework and cooking at holiday time).

5. *Sharing of yourself:* Some people told about their own holidays and what they were thinking.

6. *Asking for clarification:* Some didn't understand part of the entry and asked the person to explain more.

Elsa asked which of the above kinds of response might motivate the student to write more? Some people said that asking questions would trigger more writing; others said that just having the teacher's response would make them feel good and write more. Some dialogue journal researchers say that asking questions often results in shorter responses because students feel that they have to limit themselves to answers, and that teachers sharing their own thoughts/stories triggers more. Elsa suggested that the best way to find out what works with your own students is to try various strategies and see what happens with each.

Low level students: Kennya said that she liked the idea of the dialogue journals but that it would be too hard for beginning students to do. Ernst said that even writing one word could be powerful. He worked with a student who wrote *ekri* and *li* (read and write in Creole). They talked about why the person wanted to read and write. Roberto said that if they're comfortable, they'll be more open and write more.

Interviews: Although we were planning to interview each other again, there wasn't time. Elsa will interview everyone individually; we set the schedule for this.
Party: Elsa's house, Friday, July 30th. Invitations were passed out.

APPENDIX C1

Possible questions for student interviews

Can you tell some stories about experiences you had before you knew how to read and write? What was your life like then?

How did you feel about learning before you came to the Center?
How do you feel now?

Why was it important for you to learn to read and write?
(Why did you want to come to the Center?)

What difference has learning to read and write made in your life?
What are some of the things that you can do now that you couldn't do before?
(How do you communicate with your family?)

What helped you to learn to read and write?
What happened in class?
Have your ideas about how to learn to read and write changed? DO you like certain ways of learning (kinds of lessons) now that you didn't like before?

What do you still need or want to learn?

What are your hopes - what do you want to do - now that you can read and write?

Content knowledge	date	date	date	comments
U.S. culture				
health issues				
immigration issues				
workplace issues				

English uses outside class				

Class participation				
volunteers				
participates in discussion				
writes on board				
shares work				
listens to others				
presents opinions				
comfortable with peers				
helps others				

Learning strategies				
understands why L1 literacy				
can explain goals				
corrects self				
asks for help				

Feelings about self				
shows self-confidence				
is willing to take risks				
is comfortable in class				

Site participation				
fundraising				
magazine				
recruitment				

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APPENDIX C 2

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Name ______________ Teacher ______________ Class ________

Mechanics of writing	date	date	date	comments
knows alphabet				
writes name				
identifies consonants, vowels				
writes alphabet				
uses capital & small letters				
copies letters				
copies words				
writes with ease/quickly				
uses capital and small letters				
uses punctuation in writing				
puts spaces between words				
knows sound of letters				
spells correctly				
prints				
writes in cursive				

Writing

writes words				
writes sentences				
writes short texts				
thinks while writing				
writes interesting texts				
revises own writing				
enjoys writing; wants to write				
writes letters				
writes in journals				
shares writing				
fills out forms				
chooses own topics				

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Reading	date	date	date	comments
reads name				
decodes words				
understands words				
identifies syllables in word				
reads, understands sentences				
reads, understands short texts				
reads what he/she has said				
can read own stories				
uses punctuation in reading				
wants to read; curious				
uses context to understand				
reads silently				
can explain what he/she reads				

Literacy uses outside class

writes letters				
sorts mail				
writes money orders				
reads bills				
reads advertisements				

Math

addition				
subtraction				
multiplication				
division				
word problems				
makes budgets				
recognizes two digit numbers				

Grammar

recognizes nouns, verbs				
identifies a sentence				

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Name ____________________ Teacher ____________ Class ________

Kind of knowledge **Date** **Date** **Date** **Comments**

Knowledge of alphabet

Mechanics of writing

Reading

Writing

Uses of reading outside class	date	date	date	comments

Uses of writing outside class

Math

Class participation

Learning Strategies

Feelings about self

ESL

Grammar

	date	date	date	comments

Writing

Oral English

Reading
